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TRAGEDIES,

BY

WILLIAM SOTHEBY, ESQ.

THE DEATH OF DARNLEY.
IVAN.
ZAMORIN AND ZAMA.
THE CONFESSION.
ORESTES.

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TO

MISS JOANNA BAILLIE.

Dear Madam,

In dedicating a Volume of Tragedies to the Author of the Dramas on the Passions, who can be more aware, than I am, of the hazardous comparison to which I subject myself? that consideration, however, will not deter me from thus publicly expressing my high admiration of your poetic powers, and the enjoyment that I have long experienced from a friendship, which has convinced me that the qualities of your heart enhance those of your genius.

WILLIAM SOTHEBY.

Upper Seymour-Street,
June 3, 1814.

THE

DEATH OF DARNLEY,

A TRAGEDY

IN

FIVE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Men.

Henry Darnley, *King of Scotland.*
Earl Bothwell.
Earl Morton.
Earl Ruthven.
Sir Thomas Randolph, *Embassador of Elizabeth.*
David Rizzio, *Foreign Secretary to Queen Mary.*
Lindsay, *Confident of Rizzio.*
Siward, *Servant of the Queen.*
John Hepburn,
John Hay,
Herman, *a page,* } *Servants of Bothwell.*

Lords, Guards, Heralds, &c. &c. Musicians, Dancers.

Women.

Mary, *Queen of Scotland.*
Countess of Argyle, *the Queen's natural sister.*

SCENE, Edinburgh and its suburbs.

THE

DEATH OF DARNLEY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Antichamber of Rizzio's Apartment at Holy-rood. The Stage crowded with Courtiers and Suitors.

Two of Rizzio's Gentlemen Ushers.

1 *Gent.* Look how they press: their clamorous noise confounds me.
All suitors?
2 *Gent.* Yes—You are but new in office—
'Tis ever thus: hither, at dawn of day,
All hasten, ere our Lord, high-honour'd Rizzio,
Goes forth to greet his sovereign—
1 *Suit.* [*Presenting a petition to the Gent. U.*] Sir—I pray—
2 *Suit.* My suit is—
3 *Suit.* And—sir—mine—
4 *Suit.* Hear, I beseech you—

2 *Gent.* Peace, sirs, such clamour would awake
the dead—
Think you by thus outvoicing all the rest
To gain respect? You do forget yourself,
Nor pay due honour to Lord Rizzio's state.
This is no place for brawling—
1 *Suit* To your kindness
Let me commend my suit: if you but whisper
The name of Ronald to lord Rizzio's ears,
Claim me for life your debtor—
2 *Gent.* Silence—silence!
Lord Rizzio comes—

[*Folding doors flung open. On Rizzio's advance, all in silence bow before him. After a pause, a Suitor speaks aside to the* 2 *Gent. Usher.*]

1 *Suit.* Forget me not—
2 *Gent.* My lord,
This much-deserving man—
Riz. [*interrupting him.*] I ask'd not of him—
If justice urge his suit, 'tis freely granted,
If not, who pleads his cause, bears my displeasure.
Courtiers. Freely command us.
Riz. [*Aside.*] Worthless all—I know them—
Deem they me proud? 'tis their servility,
And they must reap its bitter fruit—contempt.—
I thank your zeal, and, I beseech you, sirs,
Bear me not blame that I reject your service:
My gracious sovereign's bounty far o'erpays
His servant's utmost efforts.

Suitors. [*presenting petition.*] Deign to cast
On these our humble suits an eye of favour.
Riz. [*to a servant.*] Receive, and in my chamber
duly place them.
They shall not be neglected —
Our gracious sovereign will each wrong redress:
Each merit recompense.— [RUTHVEN *enters.*
Earl Ruthven here!
'Tis an unlook'd for honour—
Ruth. Bid these hence:
We must have secret conference.
Riz. My friends,
Retire! [*All but Rizzio and Ruthven depart.*]—My
lord, I scarce can doubt the cause
Which brings you at this hour to Rizzio's roof;
Nor would I lightly hazard your displeasure:
But, if your word—I mean not to offend—
Breathe aught disloyal, aught that slightly touches
The honour, peace, nay pleasure of my sovereign,
Spare me the utterance—
Ruth. If to reconcile
Her father's son, the brother of her blood
To his high-honour'd sovereign, if to bring
The sigh of deep repentance to her ear,
If to lay prostrate at her throne, the chieftain
Whose power has strength to shake it, deem you this
Disloyal or ungrateful, I will spare you
Th' unwelcome utterance—
Riz. I entreat you, speak—
Ruth. I will not idly dwell upon the past;
Fierce feuds, and civil wars that long have fill'd

The realm with woe.—Enough, that now Earl Murray,
Mov'd by just sense of his acknowledg'd error —
Riz. [*interrupting.*] His guilt—rebellion —
Ruth. To his sov'reign's mercy
Submits, if Rizzio, by strong motives sway'd,
Will plead in his behalf—The hour's most urgent:
This day, the council meet, the states, to-morrow:
The ban and proclamation are gone forth;
Earl Murray must in person now appear,
Answering the accusation, or await
A traitor's doom. Your counsel, sir, all know it,
Much moves the sovereign—Name your terms, command them,
Wealth, office, honours—Here we are alone—
Take this rare gem, [*offering a ring.*] sure pledge of Murray's friendship,
And mine, and Morton's favour.
Riz. No, my lord;
I will not touch that pledge—yet, would to heav'n
That Rizzio's words had power to reunite
The realm in bonds of peace! But, how persuade
The queen to look on Murray? Tho' her soul
Incline to mercy, yet, too freshly bleeds
The wound inflicted by a brother's hand—
Deep weighs upon her heart that day, when Murray,
Her father's son, her once-lov'd brother, rais'd
His arm in battle, from her realm to drive
His sovereign, and with murderous hand unthrone
The youth her soul adores.
Ruth. Rizzio, reflect,

Tho' keen your glance, and vers'd in courtly ways,
It cannot read the heart. Those worshippers,
Light flutterers in life's sunshine, on whose lip
Insidious flattery speaks in borrow'd smiles,
Will in your need forsake you.—Sir, Earl Murray
Has powerful friends, while you, in this rude realm,
By jealousy and hate encompass'd, dwell
A solitary stranger?

Riz. Courts Earl Ruthven
A solitary stranger?

Ruth. Hear, rash man!
Take Ruthven's proffer'd hand, or dread his vengeance.
Rizzio, the choice is thine—

Riz. No—honour, duty,
Faith, gratitude, forbid—The Earl's return
Would but revive a flame that must be quench'd
In royal blood.

Ruth. Art thou resolv'd?

Riz. I am.

Ruth. Ill-fated man! be Murray now restor'd,
Or, I forewarn thee, slave, when next we meet,
Beware of Ruthven. [*Ruthven goes.*

Riz. Ha!

Messenger *enters.*

Mes. My lord—the man—
His name I know not—He, who oft, in secret,
By night here meets you, seeks admittance.

Riz. Go!

Conduct him hither—[*Mess. returns with Lindsay.*
Hence— [*to the Mess.*
We are alone—[*to Lindsay.*
Speak freely, faithful Lindsay—
Lind. Look on this, [*a paper.*]
My lord, ere yet you seek the royal presence,
Strictly peruse this statement: it concerns
More than yourself: a kingdom's weal's at hazard.
Riz. [*perusing the statement.*] Earl Murray, and Elizabeth conjoin'd!
[*Reads on.*] Morton and Randolph leagu'd!—Perfidious traitors!
Lind. Soon shall their guilt be manifest.
Riz. Good Lindsay!
Thro' all their wiles pursue them, and expose
To the clear light of day the dark recesses
Of Morton's guileful mind—Trace out this plot,
And claim of me large recompense—
Lind. My lord;
My friends, tho' few, are firm and eagle-ey'd.
There are, 'neath Morton's roof, men gained by gold,
Who move at my disposal.—If I err not
You shall obtain, ere night, ere close of council,
Sure proofs of their conspiracy. [*Lindsay goes.*
Riz. Farewell—
How? how escape their vengeance?—I must perish—
My spirit is o'erpower'd: guile after guile,
Treason on treason—Here, designing Randolph,
Fit instrument of dark Elizabeth,

In compact with insidious Morton, labours
My sov'reign's vow'd destruction: daring Murray
There meditates fierce inroad on her kingdom.
Without, impending horrors, and within
Factions and feuds and treachery — Barbarous realm!
Farewell! Where'er I pass, hate, envy, malice
Pursue my step, and every blameless deed
Brand with unjust detraction.—I'll depart—
But how bid thee farewell; thou, o'er whose sceptre
In vain sweet Mercy bends, attempering justice:
Thou, who o'er this dark realm in vain pour'st forth
The bright illumination of thy soul,
A sun that gleams on frozen solitudes,
Lighting up tracts of horror: gracious mistress!
How leave thee to their wiles? Yet — Rizzio's murder
Beneath thy palace roof would fill thy soul
With horror and deep anguish—Be thou spar'd
That aggravated woe! I'll quit the realm—
Yet, ere I go for ever, tho' each word
Will pierce her heart, yet must I bear, perforce,
The king's contemptuous answer—much-wrong'd sov'reign!
How will the scene which ends thy suff'rings close?

[*Exit.*

Scene changes to Bothwell's House.

BOTHWELL.

Both. Deem they, dull fools, that Bothwell tamely labours
To work their petty ends? A crown I grasp at,
And her who wears it: no light acquisition,
Nor by light deeds achiev'd—day after day
Matures my high-rais'd hopes—Can Scotland's queen,
Whose peerless charms and rare accomplishments
From the wide world claim homage, still submit
To cold neglect, and the capricious humours
Of a vain stripling? who now likes, now loaths,
Shifting his fancies with each transient moment.
Where now his haunt? not with his beauteous consort
In royal palaces: yon lonely roof
Conceals this phantom king: his guards, the grooms
That wait on his low sports; the hawk and hound,
And the field's idle labours.—Crafty Morton!
I know thee well, that thou canst sound the heart
And draw its secrets forth:—thou dost suspect
My daring aim: thine too has not escaped me—
My power must aid them: Bothwell's pow'r must compass
Earl Murray's pardon, yea, and their advancement.
Shall I then meanly limit the reward

That waits such service?—They shall crown my
hope
To its o'erflowing height.

Page *enters.*

Page. My lord—
Both. Well, boy!
Page. The masque but waits your word—I hear
the prelude,
Shrill pipe and tabret temper'd to the ring
Of harp and cymbal, and melodious swell
Of the sweet-voic'd recorders—
Both. Go, my boy,
Away—and like wing'd Zephyr quaintly rob'd,
Lead the gay masque, and on the Queen's approach
These rhymes present: [*gives him a letter:*] and say,
" the crowned Moor
Who yesterday, at tournay, in her presence,
Unhors'd the giant Frenchman, and proclaim'd
Proud Scotland's Queen the peerless flow'r of beauty,
Making the challeng'd field confess her charms,
Now, as a slave, sues at her feet to lay
The envied prize." Away.
Page. [*Running off*] This will delight her. [*Exit.*
Both. Were it but this, it were an easy task—
But not by sports and revels, not by show
And mimicry of combat, tilt and tournay,
Must Scotland's Queen be won: by ruthless war,
By deeds more fell than battle, deeds of murder,
That prize must be achiev'd, if true the beldam

Who watch'd my fated birth, and o'er my cradle
Mutter'd strange horrors.

HEPBURN *enters.*

Hepburn!—Wherefore here?
Why thus uncall'd?

Hep. The cause, my Lord, I trow,
Will more than justify my bold intrusion.
The gray-hair'd man, the shepherd, that fam'd seer,
Whom you in vain so oft have sought to question,
Is once again return'd.

Both. Mean you hoar Donald?
Is it indeed gray Donald?

Hep. 'Tis that shepherd,
He whom we call the Prophet of the Isles.
His beard is whiter than the new-fall'n snow.
He is once more return'd: all flock around him!
And some bow down before him: yet there are
Who cannot bear his aspect, when he fixes
His broad eye on them.

Both. Why not here?—You knew
How anxiously I sought him.

Hep. Good, my Lord,
I did entreat him earnestly; I said,
A Lord of pow'r—I did not name Earl Bothwell,
Would lavishly reward him. He replied not,
But shook his silver locks, and seem'd to smile
Half pitying, half in scorn.

Both. Bid Hay close watch
His path—Prepare my Moorish robes; and, Hepburn,

Let all my train be summon'd to attend me
In Eastern pomp—Away [*he goes.*]—That seer,
hoar Donald,
All know it well—the kingdom far and near
Yet rings of it—did speak of Beaton's death,
Yea, and the manner of the cardinal's murder,
Ere he who shed his blood had plann'd the deed.
He comes in happiest hour : he shall unfold
Th'uncertain issue of these dark events,

MORTON *enters unperceived.*

Shall speak of Bothwell's crown, of Bothwell's
wedlock
With his soul's sovereign.
Mor. [*overhearing him.*] Ha! 'tis as I thought.
I'll break the charm—Health to the brave Earl
Bothwell.
Both. Earl Morton! Pardon my uncourteous
seeming—
Forgive—I heard you not—
Mor. No, you were list'ning
To your own words: words that the heart disclose—
Beware—
Both. My lord, how mean you?
Mor. Nay—but this,
That Bothwell's inmost thoughts are known to all.
Both. Are they so common that the public tongue
May freely descant on?
Mor. The very stones
That pave our city ring of gallant Bothwell—

Ask them whose trumpet summons to the tournay,
Enquire who gives the festival, who leads
The gay carousal, whose fleet maskers flash
Like sun-beams up and down the dazzled streets?
One answer cries, " Lord Bothwell."—
Both. Truce, my lord,
No more of this—'Twas not for this, I know,
To waste the idle hour, and loosely prattle
Of revelry and feast, and gay carousal,
You brake upon my privacy.
Mor. 'Tis true.
You know the wish that day and night here weighs.
Both. Yes—to recal Earl Murray.
Mor. And in this
I seek, my lord, your powerful aid. In fame,
In wealth, in arms, what chieftain equals Bothwell?
Whose voice more sways our sovereign queen?
Both. Whose? Rizzio's.
Mor. At the approach of Bothwell's foot, that worm
Shall shrink beneath the earth.
Both. But first 'twill sting me.
Mor. If by unmanly terror you invite it.
Both. Unmanly terror! are those terms well weigh'd?
Is it Lord Morton's wish to rouse my anger?
Mor. Yes, to its utmost swell: till it o'erflows,
And like a flood resistless sweeps away
All that obstructs its fury.
Both. Cease this trifling.
What would you with Lord Bothwell?

Mor. That Lord Bothwell,
As friend to friend, would bare his heart to Morton;
Do but confide in me, and I will steer you
To your soul's haven.

Both. Plainly speak.

Mor. The king
Affects you much.

Both. The king, my Lord, 'tis true,
For that I love the chase, and with him commune
In well-bred phrases of the hunter's craft,
Of goss-hawk and of grey-hound, and can wind
Smoothly the bugle horn, and know the coverts
Where harts are harbour'd, and the roe-buck bedded,
Frequents my company. What then!

Mor. My Lord,
Look on these bonds. I every word have weigh'd
With cool and cautious foresight. This confirms
Ambitious Darnley's high-rais'd hopes, and binds us
To fix and guard the matrimonial crown
On his boy-brow: this we must sign. The other
By Darnley sign'd, assures the exile's pardon,
And to Earl Murray, all his former honours,
And princely pow'r. The rest, of course, ensues,
Our favour and advancement. Move, thou canst,
The king to sign it.

Both. Well we know, that crown
Is Darnley's fix'd desire: but how persuade him
To fetter his free hand, and here be branded
Our titled slave?

Mor. One artful word—'tis done,
A look would fire him. Teach his eye to glance

On Rizzio's favour—and—if hints avail not,
Dwell on his fair queen's minion. To procure
That minion's murder—if I rightly reckon—
The king would sign the bond.
Both. His hand shall sign it.
To Murray and his friends I am inclined:
You shall not doubt my zeal. With this good sword,
At hazard of my life, I would make smooth
His way to all his pow'r, so, in return,
Earl Murray and his friends would—
Mor. [*interrupting.*] Favour Bothwell.
I am his pledge, I answer for Earl Murray.
What are thy views?
Both. When Darnley enter'd Scotland,
What was his wish?
Mor. To wed the queen.
Both. No doubt.
And is it not, I pray, most right and fitting,
That he who weds the queen, e'en at his pleasure
Should rule the kingdom, if his rule restore
The Earl and his adherents, and advance
To pow'r and honours those who hold your faith:
And—further—by the royal seal assure
To you, my good Lord Morton, and your followers,
The abbies rich possessions. Is not this
Fit rule and government? and such a ruler
The idol of your worship?
Mor. Such a ruler
Would prove a nation's blessing.
Both. Further—say,
Should death untimely sweep this Darnley off,

Would you not kindly urge my suit to sooth
The beauteous mourner's woe, and her fair hand
Ease of the sceptre's weight?

Mor. The crown and sov'reign,
If Ruthven's, Morton's, Murray's pow'r avail,
Shall grace Earl Bothwell.

Both. Hand to hand, my lord,
We understand each other. Now—farewell—
I now in eastern pomp—such this day's sports—
Seek whom my soul adores. [*Bothwell goes.*]

Mor. 'Tis death thou seek'st—
Bothwell—beware. Beneath thy flow'ry path,
On watch, with gasping throat, and eye of fire,
A gilded serpent lies. There shalt thou perish,
Proud man! and on thy ruin Murray tow'r.

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Queen's Apartment.

Groups of Musicians, Singers, Dancers. Bothwell's Page habited like Zephyr.

Page. This is the order. At the queen's first entrance,
In silence lay your garlands at her feet,
Then—rise at waving of my wand. And—you—
[*Addressing the different groups.*
With lute, and cymbal, and the soft-breath'd reed,
Salute her: you—attemper'd to the music,
Match your clear notes: and, you, my sprightly play-mates,
In cadence to the song and music, mix
Your fleet steps in the many-figur'd dance,
Where Zephyr sports with Flora.

[*The* QUEEN *and Countess of* ARGYLE *enter in state, with a courtly retinue. At her entrance the masque of Zephyr and Flora begins. The Queen on her throne at first looks on the dance, but soon sinks back in seeming woe.*]

C. of Ar. A rare masque!
My gracious sov'reign! deign to view their revels.

See, like gay-coloured clouds that float around
The sun's bright car, their light limbs glance
before us,
One gracious look vouchsafe them.
Page. [*To the maskers*] Here pay homage.
[*Kneels to the Queen. They all kneel.*
Arise—blend, blend anew the foot and voice!
C. of Ar. [*To the Queen*] Such revels once had
pow'r to fill your fancy
With sprightliest images.
Queen. [*After a long pause*] Why are ye fled,
Ye days so fair, so fleet, that o'er me gleam'd
Like an enchanted dream? Why fled away
And never know return?
C. of Ar. Cease, cease the dance—
The queen is troubled.
Queen. Bear with me, my sister.
Tho' on my ear their song breath'd melody,
Sweet as the night's lone warbler's, tho' the dance
Of fabled fairies on the moon-light dews,
Scarce quaintlier than their circles, yet these sports
But breathe of pleasures past, and on the heart
Press like an added misery. With such revels,
Such winning fantasies, Love woo'd my smile
In the green bow'rs of France. [*To the maskers.*]
Thanks, gentle friends!
Let not th' untimely woe that dims my day,
Eclipse your cloudless sun-shine. Say, fair page,
Or, must I rather name you the wing'd herald
That welcomes in the spring? Say, gentle Zephyr,
Whose is this brave device?

Page. [*Page kneeling presents Bothwell's rhymes.*]
Here—royal lady,
These rhymes may haply tell. The crowned Moor,
Who yesterday at tournay, in your presence,
Unhors'd the giant Frenchman, and proclaim'd
Proud Scotland's queen, the peerless flow'r of beauty,
Making the challeng'd field confess her charms,
Now, prostrate at her foot-stool, sues to lay
The envied prize.
Queen. Such suit was ne'er denied.
[*Page goes out.*

[Bothwell, *as a Moorish king, enters with a stately retinue, kneels, and lays the tournay prize at the Queen's feet.*]

Queen. Rise, gallant Moor! and, if a lady's plume
May grace a warrior's helm, and if you deem
The conqueror repaid, whom Scotland's queen
Her champion names, champion of Scotland's queen,
Earl Bothwell, rise!
Both. My wealth, my power, my friends,
My life, my soul, command them. May I bid
These from your presence?
Queen. Wherefore?
Both. I would fain
Alone address you. 'Tis no idle speech
That claims my sov'reign's ear.
Queen. Another time.
Both. Danger and death surround you.
Queen. I can front them.

Both. Bothwell shall guard his sov'reign. Royal lady,
The traveller who haunts untrodden wilds
Where fierce beasts prowl, at every step, by day
Casts round his path fear's searching glance, at night
Circles his couch with fire. Full fain would Bothwell
Be to thy day a sun, whose beam before you
Lights all the way: and, ever-more by night
Watch as th' undying flame, that o'er the altar
From profanation and rude touch unblest,
Guards the adored image.

Rizzio *enters.*

Queen. Rizzio—
Have you then seen the king?
Riz. I bear his words.
The public must not hear them.
Both. [*Aside.*] How she greets him!
See—interchange they not familiar smiles?
Insidious sycophant!
Queen. Go, faithful Rizzio,
Say to that gallant knight, a fitter time
May claim his audience.
Riz. My Lord Bothwell—
Both. [*Interrupting him.*] Cease
I mark'd each word: you need not echo it:
'Twill not receive new graces from your utterance.
Your champion, [*to the Queen.*] at the council, gracious lady,
Will so sustain your throne, that Scotland's queen

Will not, methinks, there chase him from her presence.
Stranger! [*To Rizzio.*] beware: the natives of this realm
Are a proud race. Our nobles brook not tamely
The rule and nod of minions.

[*Bothwell and Maskers depart.*

Queen. Go, my friends!
Leave me with Rizzio. Gentle Countess, stay:
To thee my soul its inmost thoughts entrusts.
Speak—[*To Rizzio.*] nought conceal.

Riz. 'Twill stab you to the heart.

Queen. Perpetual woe has chill'd it. I had once
A heart that keenly felt. Oh Darnley, Darnley!
Look on me, I entreat you, as a flow'r
On whose fast-fading leaves, ere fully blown,
The snow-storm has descended, and sore shatter'd
In its first fragrance—On its stalk it withers
Reckless of show'r and sunshine—Such I am.
Thy sovereign bids thee speak.—Why pause?

Riz. The king
Is link'd with traitors—and—

Queen. [*interrupting him.*] Bad men deceive him;
Not yet this heart is stone—Why quit me, Darnley?
Why leave the shelter of these guardian arms?
And will he not comply with my request?
Not that lone roof abandon? It disgraces
Alike his state and mine—

Riz. The king no more
Returns to Holy-rood—

Queen. What then am I?

Some loathsome object? – But—He loves you not—
Ho! Siward—

SIWARD *enters.*

With this man, this skillful horseman,
Alone of all the train who tend my person
Will he at times deign conference. Go, Siward:
With reverence—with entreaty—with submission—
And, is it come to this?—Bad men betray him—
Oh! he is new to life, in the first bloom
Of guileless youth, quick-passion'd, slightly mov'd,
And in the world's dark mazes all unskill'd—
I will not leave him to their wiles a prey—
My prayers, my tears may move him—I must see him.
Once, once his Mary's voice had pow'r to sway him:
Again these arms shall shelter him, again
My Henry on this bosom shall repose.
Say—

Siw. Whom must I address, my royal mistress?

Queen. Did I not name your sov'reign? Go, good Siward,
Address the king:
Entreat him to return: say, that all honour,
Proud retinue, and pomp, and royal state
Shall gratulate his coming—[*Siward goes.*] This, at least
Will sooth his pride—His pride!—and what am I?
To be rejected, scorn'd!—Ungrateful youth,
Hast thou forgotten all? Thy words, thy vows
Yet vibrate on my heart: each graceful feature

Still warmly glowing there.—Rizzio, you urg'd not
With fondness my request, but coldly bore
A tutor'd speech—
Riz. No—fervently I urg'd it—
Zeal lent my lip its eloquence—In truth
I could not choose but say, how leave those charms,
Charms, which uncrown'd, unscepter'd, well might move
The masters of the world to wage fierce contest.
I could not choose but say, who hails his sovereign,
The proudest chieftain who draws nigh the throne
Feels honour'd in his homage—Then I dwelt
On Arran, Scotland's heir, whose eagle eye
Gaz'd on the sun, till reason all-o'erpow'r'd
Melted beneath the blaze—While yet I spake,
The king, who first all graciously, methought,
Had bow'd his ear, while from his eye-lid stole
A tear of fond regret, on sudden fir'd
By scornful rage, exclaimed, " Slave, tell thy mistress
" The king prefers yon solitary roof
" To Holy-rood's polluted court, the haunt
" Of low-born minions—
Queen. Ha!
Riz. [*Aside.*] I'll quit the realm:
Rizzio shall never give her soul displeasure—
I liv'd but in her sun-shine.—Gracious mistress,
Whose kindness ne'er thy servant's pray'r denied,
Now grant my last request—[*kneels.*]
Queen. Why kneel? Arise—
You, you alone of all who court my favour

I still have found most loyal.—What thy suit?
What wish you—wealth, or pow'r, or added
honour?
Demand it—
Riz. No—obscurity and peace—
I pray your patience—He, who now entreats you,
Had birth 'mid rocks and mountains, on whose brow
Th'eternal snows have rest, in a green vale
Where shepherds tend their flocks, in the brief season
When summer looks on Alpine solitudes.
Lady. the birth-place of the mountaineer
Is twin'd around the heart—We may, at times,
In the pursuit of wealth and pow'r, forget it,
But 'tis within the heart: and if, perchance,
We hear the horn that call'd the herd to pasture,
Or catch a rude note of the green corn-pipe
That breathes our native melodies, each day
Hour after hour, consum'd by fond regret
We waste away, no more revisiting
The spot where first our naked footstep sported—
Do not deny me: let me there return,
And close the remnant of life's troublous day
In privacy and peace—
Queen. None left on earth
In whom my soul may blamelessly confide?
Arm'd guards my state surround, beneath my sight
Where'er I gaze obsequious courtiers kneel,
And wide and general as the air, the breath
Of flatterers hails my presence; yet—in these
I trust not. On thy faith I firmly rested:
Wilt thou desert thy sovereign?—

Riz. Never, never;
Here let me rather die.—
Queen. What mean you, Rizzio?
Riz. This—There are men, beneath your palace roof,
Whose daggers will leap forth at sight of Rizzio—
How shall I 'scape their malice?
Queen. First their daggers,
Shall drink their sovereign's blood—

SIWARD *enters.*

Ha! Siward! speak.
Siw. If, seeming harsh, let not your servant's words
Offend you—I but speak the king's command.
Say—"that my fix'd resolve to her is known,
"My will, in this, unchang'd, unchangeable—
"But—that if Scotland's queen this day, at council,
"Obey my word, and at the assembled states
"Fix on my brow the crown: I will return:
"Else—never."
Queen. Fix upon his brow the crown!—
Would that I might: and that the glowing image
Which fir'd my fancy, were no vain illusion!
Angel! that guard'st this empire, hear my pray'r!
Make the exalted youth, by me ador'd,
The idol of a nation: gift his soul
With pow'r to sway a realm: that I may take
The crown from off my brow to grace his temples,
And greatly glory in my self-abasement

Height'ning his exaltation!—Scotland's crown
Is no vain toy to deck the brow of beauty.
'Tis heav'n's high charge: a proud inheritance
From far-fam'd ancestors, king after king,
A countless generation. I will guard it.
Yea, and transmit its honours to my offspring
With undiminish'd lustre. Siward, bear
My answer back: say, "that we meet in council."
[*Siward goes.*
Darnley! thou might'st have wound thyself by kindness
Into my yielding bosom. Scorn — contemn me —
Darnley! thou meet'st at council Scotland's Queen.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to a Suburb of the City.

DONALD.

Don. I'm o'er-wearied.
Old age doth lack repose, and other aid
To prop its weakness than this shepherd's crook.
My limbs have lost their suppleness, and truly
'Tis the last time that Donald will be found
A wanderer from the birth-place of his fathers.
My old friends here are gone, the young ones vex
And harass me with questions: and some whisper
I have a demon, and can raise the dead.
Poor silly idlers! here they throng.

Common People enter.

1 *Man.* Say, prophet.
Oh you know all.
2 *Man.* Tell us——

BOTHWELL *enters disguised, and drives them out.*

Both. Away—begone.
Don. Why have you driven them hence?
Both. Because my soul
Seeks commune far beyond their silly natures.
I have long sought you.
Don. Wherefore?
Both. I would fain
Hold serious conference with you. You foretold
Proud Beaton's death: and, ere the army's flight,
Our loss at Solway, when the lords refus'd
To serve with Sinclair: and—you truly added—
That our brave king, whose front had fac'd a lion,
James, would not long that day of shame survive.
Time-honour'd prophet—
Don. I am none. You see
A simple shepherd.
Both. You are rarely gifted
With that prophetic quality, which brings
The shadowy world, and those that tenant it,
As on a living theatre to act
Their part before you. Hence, you see me here
No common suitor: and, I now entreat you

To lift the veil up from futurity,
And in the dark abyss of days to come,
Point out my fate.

Don. Why search it out? Enough,
Death and dire woes that make the grave a refuge
Wait thee and all mankind: there too shall Donald
Rest with his fathers, those who never knew
That the prophetic curse hung o'er their child;—
Or never had the day that saw his birth
Their blessing heard. Leave me.

Both. First yield me answer.

Don. Misjudging mortal! mark old Donald's warning:
Mark what the burden of the woe laid on him:
'Tis mine to view in youth's fair-opening flow'r,
Th' untimely worm that wastes it. I beheld
My virgin bride, when first I clasp'd her charms,
Pale in her winding sheet. And now my mind
Is dark with horrors, such as thou must feel,
If, ere the hour, thou clearly could'st discern
The ills that wait on life. Hast thou a hope?
Feed on it: does a wish thy pulse-beat quicken?
Indulge it, and thy heart will leap with gladness:
But—whosoe'er thou art, hear, younger man!
The fruits of hoar experience: pass thy days
In trust and resignation on heaven's will,
But seek not to foreknow what God in mercy
Has from man's search conceal'd.—

Both. Answer, or meet
My vengeful wrath—

Don. Rash man! of him enquire

Who in the clay whereon he stampt his image
Breath'd a celestial spirit. At his impulse
Alone I speak —
Both. Then, can'st thou not, hoar seer,
At will call up, retain, dismiss the scenes
That prescient float before you ?
Don. Bid the lake
That spreads its mirror mid the range of mountains
Draw down the golden sun, when the pale moon
And each small star on its dark bosom twinkles:
Or back recall the feaster and gay bridegroom
When the slow train of burial o'er it flings
Its melancholy shadow—Shade on shade
Succeeds, and passes off—Thus 'tis with me ;
My mind is as the mirror of that water :
Before me, forms in swift succession glide,
And whispers of the names of men unknown :
Some pass away forgotten, some remain
Part clear, in part confus'd ; others there are
Of that impressive nature, that whene'er
If but by chance once more I catch a whisper
Of names so syllabled, or view in life
A glance of those in vision, the whole scene
With all th' attendant train of weal and woe
Perforce starts up before me.
Both. Has the name
Of Bothwell, ere so whisper'd, caught thine ear ?
Don. It rests not on the memory.
Both. Has thine eye
In vision of the future e'er beheld
These features ? [*Unveils himself.*]

Don. Hence—begone—dark vision, hence!
Both. Why groan you? What my fate?
Don. Why, man of blood,
Why steal you forth in silence and dark midnight?
An eye from heav'n beams on thy secret way.
The mine is laid—is sprung. Saw you the blaze?
The pale moon gaz'd upon it, and withdrew
Curtain'd in blood. Heard you the roar—the crash
As of infernal thunder that disjoins
Earth's deep foundations? The lone roof, the rock
Whereon its strength found rest, in air are vanish'd.
There dies the king.
Both. By hell, he pictures forth
My secret thought.
Don. Blow the soft flute—with dance, and song, and feast,
Bring in the royal bride. So young, so fair;
Twice, twice a widow! yet so young, so fair!
See how her auburn locks turn silvery grey:
Untimely chang'd! see, how the scaffold glows
With royal blood. Where art thou, Bothwell?—fled?
Thou shield a queen! thou canst not save thyself!
Hence, fugitive! hence, pirate!
Both. Wretch! be silent.
Don. Thy lone sail flaps upon a slumberous ocean.
Speed, they o'ertake thee.
Both. I will hear no more.
Peace, madman! thou wert brib'd to vex my soul.
Don. Where is the bridegroom now?
Both. What bridegroom! who?

Don. They know him not, a stranger to their realm.
But I know Bothwell's features in that captive
Chain'd in a dungeon, raving.

Both. [*Drawing his dagger.*] Madman—hence.
[*Drives him out.*
Thy grey hairs stand between thee and my vengeance.
Ne'er shall the wanderings of a frantic mind
Turn Bothwell's spirit from its fixt intent. [*Exit.*

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Near the Kirk of Field.

BOTHWELL.

Both. [*Pointing to a lone house.*] There his lone roof—fit haunt for such a sovereign!

King. [*Behind the scenes.*] Begone, dull fool!

Both. He speaks as one in rage.

King. [*Behind the scenes.*] Begone—fail not to find him.

Both. Whence this fury? His roan, perchance, is lame, or favourite falcon 'Scap'd from the mews. And must I calmly witness This boy-king's humours? yes, I like this mood: The easier shall my words pour in his soul The venom that empoisons it.

The KING *enters, habited like a hunter, with attendant Falconers, &c.*

King. [*Speaking to one of his Attendants.*] Away.

Atten. I do entreat forgiveness.

King. By my crown I swear—

Atten. Oh, pardon.

King. If you fail to find him,

Expect no mercy. Seek me here ere sun-set,
Or never more the sun shall find you out,
In the dark dungeon where your days shall close.
Hence, all, and aid his search.

[*His Attendants depart.*

Both. What moves your highness.

King. Dull, senseless wretch! that noble animal,
With untir'd foot throughout the summer day
From sun-rise to the setting of the moon,
Searching drop after drop the tainted soil,
O'er marsh and moor, thro' the long forest glades,
And the dark windings of the under-woods,
Would trace the wounded deer, and singly hold
At bay the antler'd stag. [*To Bothwell.*] You know my favourite,
The far-fam'd blood-hound, which the king of France,
My brother, when he deck'd me with this order,
Sent with Lord Rambouillet: his choicest breed,
The staunchest of his pack: that senseless churl
Loos'd him, but now, in very wantoness:
He's gone, and none know whither. By my faith,
I shrewdly do suspect some purse-proud abbot,
Far fonder of the chase than matin pray'r,
Has brib'd the villain.

Both. Pray you, be compos'd,
The loss, I grant, is heavy: but there are
Objects of weightier moment that demand
Your deepest thoughts: and—if your majesty—

King. [*Interrupting him.*] Bothwell.

Both. My liege.

King. Was it your masks whose revels
Rung thro' our streets this morn?
Both. I pray attend.
This day the council meets. The cause imports
The honour of your crown: and if the king
But grant my suit, here on my knee, I swear,
Your hand shall wield the sceptre. We will free you
From the harsh yoke of a capricious woman:
And—more degrading than that yoke—no longer
Shall the king's will be thwarted by a slave,
That sycophant—that minion.
King. Ha!
Both. Your pardon—
Her favourite, Rizzio—one—
King. You seem confus'd,
You have close access to her, haunt her palace.
Know you why Scotland's queen no more, as once,
Yields to my will observance?
Both. Who can trace
The mazes of a woman's varying fancy?
This mood, and that inclines it: and the sex,
From mutability itself, extract
Strange pleasure. Your fair consort can assume
All characters at will, and seem in each
As born for that alone. Have we not seen her
In the brief compass of a day, at council
Wise as Jove's sapient daughter: then, at court
In grace and gait a Juno: now, at banquet
Like Love's gay goddess crown the cup with joy:
Anon on her war-steed like arm'd Bellona,
Wielding no woman's weapon? But—there reigns

Thro' all this pliability of mood,
Fix'd in her heart—How shall I rightly name it?
Taste—instinct—sympathy?

King. Nay, speak.

Both. My liege,
It cannot have escap'd you. If the queen
Catch the sweet concord of harmonious sounds,
Or wild note of a natural melody,
A reed soft-breathed, or lightly-finger'd lute,
How will the sound draw forth her very soul,
Till every sense, as touch'd by strange enchantment,
Dissolves in sweet forgetfulness: the while
On her soft-heaving bosom tears will glide,
Shed in delicious agony. My liege,
I have forgot the time, tell me, I pray,
Since when, the man from Savoy, the musician,
Came to this court a stranger.

King. [*Aside.*] Means he that?
Sometimes—it came across me—I confess—
If it be so, not hell itself can hold
The fiend that rages here. Nay—give it vent.

Both. Your wealthiest nobles envy that man's treasure.

King. Give it at once the utterance. Is she false?

Both. Who loves the lute or smoothly-breathed reed,
Or warble of a dulcet voice, no doubt
Cannot dislike the hand which tunes the chord,
Or scorn the lip that lends the flute and song
Their modulated melody,

King. 'Tis clear.

Both. What?

King. Thou hast said that Darnley's wife
loves Rizzio.
Give me thy dagger.
Both. Not in that hot mood.
First, be assured—the king hath friends. But, sire,
Were it not better, first by soothing flattery,
Once more to win your way into her heart?
You have of late neglected her. My liege,
Your looks—your smiles—a smile from one so grac'd,
May fire the coldest bosom—then demand,
As proof of love, this Rizzio's exile.
King. [*Interrupting him.*] Life.
Both. And—if denied—there are bold fiery spirits,
Men, whom the minion's insolence and scorn
Have grievously offended. One I know,
A chief of daring valour.
King. Who?
Both. Bold Ruthven:
Nor hard the task, my liege, to gain his aid.
Vouchsafe a gracious look on these: [*the Bonds.*
these bonds,
Devis'd by cautious Morton. This secures
Your rightful claim, and on your brow encircles
The matrimonial crown: and, if th' offence
And the king's wounded honour urge the deed,
Here, in this bond, shall Ruthven pledge his faith,
At thy command, to free th' indignant realm
Of that base minion. This, my liege, when sanction'd
By your authority, to Murray grants
Free grace and pardon.
King. Rizzio shall not live.

Both. Sign this,—the minion dies. Be this but sign'd
The banish'd lords shall kneel before thy throne,
Guilt flings the woman on her husband's mercy,
And thou art—sov'reign.

King. [*Takes the bond.*] At the council's close,
At entrance of the queen's apartment meet me.
The slave shall die: my word shall give the warrant.
[*Exit.*

Both. The hope that hung upon my gifted birth
In golden prospect, opens fair before me.
'Tis fated—'tis decreed—I wed the queen.
Let me but grasp the sceptre, fiend of darkness!
Nor fraud nor force shall hurl me from the throne.
[*Exit.*

Scene the Second. Rizzio's Apartment.

Rizzio.

Riz. Ere yet the council close—so Lindsay promis'd—
Their guilt shall be expos'd. The time now urges:
Ere this, the lords who favour Murray, all,
Now at unwonted hour in council meet,
By the king's urgent summons. Hapless youth!
How bright thy dawn of day, how clouded o'er
By pride and erring passion! ah, that Rizzio
Might, at life's sacrifice, confound the traitors
That urge thee on to ruin.

LINDSAY *enters.*

Lindsay!

Lind. [*Presents papers.*] Here—
Here are the proofs: their guilt is manifest.
These are the transcripts of their bonds: observe them:
Thus interlin'd by Morton. No light treasure,
Nor trivial risque procur'd them.

Riz. [*Considering them.*] 'Tis his hand—
I reck not how obtain'd, nor what the bribe
That counterpois'd the hazard. Here, at midnight
Seek me again. Ho!

Servant *enters.*

Let my train be summon'd.
If I but gain admittance to the queen,
At public council, in the royal presence,
These shall convict the traitors.

Lind. Nay—beware—
Your life's at hazard.

Riz Be it sacrific'd.
Be Scotland's sov'reign sav'd—let Rizzio perish!

[*Exeunt.*

Scene the Third. The Council Room.

The KING *on his throne, in state.* RUTHVEN, *Lords, &c.*

King. Well met, my lords. Are all assembled? No—
I ask not of Lord Bothwell: his high charge
Awhile delays him: but—Earl Morton absent,
No cause assign'd. What means it? well we know
His wisdom, his experience, his authority
O'er all bear powerful sway. Lord Ruthven, answer,
You share his bosom secrets.

MORTON *enters much agitated.*

Mor. My dread liege,
I pray your pardon—no light cause detain'd me.
Would that the traitor now in tortures writh'd
Before my sight!
King. Why thus incens'd? Lord Morton,
We are not wont to see you slav'd by passion.
Mor. Your majesty—Lord Ruthven—here, apart.
Firm as these are, and faithful to our cause,
[*They come forward.*
They must not catch my whisper'd words.
King. Speak freely.
Mor. The transcripts of those bonds which Bothwell's zeal

Gave to your highness, some domestic traitor
Has from my roof purloin'd. The public eye
Must not glance on them.

King. Be compos'd: this bond [*Producing it.*
Is yet unsign'd. But—if the imperious queen
Yield not—her minion—Ruthven—[*Stops in doubt.*

Ruth. Say, my liege.

King. Ere a new day, at midnight, in her chamber,
This night—you understand me! in her chamber,
That very chamber where with lute and song
They interchange their love-sighs.

[*Flourish of trumpets.*
Hark, those trumpets!
The queen, the queen draws nigh, my lords, be seated.

[*The* QUEEN *enters in state,* BOTHWELL *bearing her sword. Heralds, Guards, &c. All, save the* KING, *rise: the* QUEEN, *in passing to her throne, salutes the* KING.]

Queen. I greet your highness. It was my intent
First to have met the council, and here waited
The king's arrival. Speak your grace's will,
Whether Earl Murray's banishment, or England
Shall first engage our care.

King. Let England first
Be heard, thro' her embassador.

Queen. Go, heralds:
And duly usher to the royal presence
The lord embassador, Sir Thomas Randolph,
Bearer of England's terms.

RANDOLPH *enters in state, and kneels to the throne.*

Ran. I humbly greet
Your majesties.
King. My lord, arise, declare
Your queen's, our sister's pleasure.
Queen. How! her pleasure!
King. It needs no tedious preface.
Queen. Why compel me
To seeming disrespect, or base desertion
Of heaven's high charge? My lord embassador,
The terms of England's queen must be addrest
To Scotland's sov'reign ruler.
King. Who am I?
Queen. My lord—my husband, whom I love and honour.
But there are public duties which compel
The soul to their subjection. I stand here
An ancient kingdom's representative,
Sole sov'reign of the realm. In me, my nation,
'Tis Scotland must be honour'd. Say, my lord,
The purport of your mission.
Ran. England's sov'reign
Sends health, and love, and amity to Scotland.
Be all the past forgotten: peace, henceforth,
Perpetual. Other terms than these we seek not,
That our beloved sister, Scotland's queen,
The king, her nobles, and her states attesting,
With her own hand and signature, confirm
The peace once vow'd at Edinburgh.

Queen. Never.
King. It meets our approbation.
Queen. Say not so:
Repeat not that the king to this consents.
'Tis to resign—my birthright.
Ran. Sov'reign lady,
Be this renew'd, and firmly ratified,
Thro' me my royal mistress plights her oath,
That the free suffrage of her parliament
Shall by the laws and statutes of our realm,
Determine the succession.
Queen. No, my lord:
Your parliament may in its balance weigh
The subject's petty claims: mine must be weigh'd
By him who in his balance pois'd the world,
And severing the nations, gave to each
Peculiar blessings: to the south, fair suns,
The maize, and jocund vine, and fruitful olive:
To Scotland, glens, and friths, and heath-clad mountains,
And 'mid bleak rocks, bold hands, and dauntless hearts,
Freedom and independence. Of that race
I sprang: and, first in blood to England's monarchs,
If England's queen go childless to the tomb,
I claim, what none can change, by right divine
The sov'reignty, my birthright.
King. [*Impatient.*] We will sign it;
Give me the treaty. A king's hand shall sign it.
Queen. If not self-reverence, nor my dignity,
Nor Scotland's glory aught avail, yet—Henry!

Pause! When thy hand has sign'd that deed of shame,
It signs away the rights of one unborn,
The sacred rights of one whose lips' first utterance
Will call thee father. By that honoured name
I now address thee: by that hallow'd union
Which heav'n has sanction'd, by those tender ties
That twine the infant round the parent's heart:
By that which gives the dove and timid hind
The lion's spirit to defend their young,
Sign not that deed of shame. King! husband! hear me:
Father! protect thy child!

King. [*Aside.*] Fix on my brow
The matrimonial crown —

Queen. The states confer it.
It rests not on my word —

King. I am thy scorn —
Sign this—or never look to see me more.

Queen. Farewell! — The sovereign may resign her sceptre,
The mother never will desert her child—

King. I am resolv'd. A sov'reign thus confirms it.
[*Signs it.*
My lords, subscribe this treaty. Who refuse,
I hold alike foes to their king and country.
[*All but Bothwell sign it.*

Queen. Let me behold their signatures. [*Considers them.*] Oh! Scotland!
All, all but one, have sign'd it —

Both. And that one

Had rather from his arm this right hand sever,
Than sign a deed dishonouring Scotland's queen—
I may not utter in the royal presence
All that my heart contains: but, I will say
That, save my lord the king, all else, whate'er
Their rank, birth, office, whose recorded names
Attest that deed, are to their queen and country
Recorded —Traitors —

Ruth. [*starting up.*] Traitors!—

Queen. [*rising.*] Peace, Earl Ruthven!
My lord embassador, return to England,
And bear my words:—that rather than degrade
The pride and majesty of Scotland's crown,
The crown of many ages:—ere consent
To sacrifice the rights of one unborn,
The child whose blessed lip first calls me mother,
I, at the imperious will of England's queen
Would gladly perish.—To this public insult,
[*holding up the treaty.*
This ignominious treaty, in whose record
No eye on earth shall e'er again behold
My husband's shame, bear back the sole reply
That honour warrants. [*The Queen tears and scatters the treaty.*] This—Farewell! with England
We hold no further conference—
[*Embassador departs.*

Messenger *enters.*

Mes. [*to the Queen.*] Gracious sovereign!
Thy servant, Rizzio, earnestly implores

Immediate audience.—Subjects of high import
Urge his entreaty—
Queen. Will your grace permit it?
King. You favour him in private—Must he mix
In our state secrets?
Queen. Favour him in private!
The man, tho' lowly born, is highly minded,
Wise, zealous, firm, in service strictly faithful:
Therefore with liberal and unsparing hand
His merits I have recompens'd. Yet, truly,
If it displease your highness to admit him,
I will in secret hear him.
Ruth. [*To the king.*] My dread liege,
The snake that we behold not surest strikes.
Let him appear before us.
Mor. [*Aside to the king.*] Grant him audience,
Rely on Morton. What this favourite utters
Shall turn to his confusion.
King. Let him enter.—

Rizzio *enters.*

Advance not. Speak thy purpose, and depart.
And—I forewarn you, let the cause, bold stranger,
Warrant this rash intrusion.
Queen. Faithful Rizzio,
Stand nigh my throne.
King. Be brief.
Riz. I pray your patience:
I will not long detain you; nor again
Shall Rizzio give the realm and king offence:

For—haply—ere yon sun has clos'd his course,
Nought, save an evanescent name, will mark
That Rizzio once had being. Let me then
Thus prostrate at your throne, my gracious mistress,
Here publicly proclaim, that to your kingdom
A low-born stranger came, that on his zeal
So shone the royal favour, that this wanderer,
This out-cast of the world, who here at last
Had found a home, a country, for that country
Felt what a patriot feels, and freely offer'd
His life a sacrifice to shield the sov'reign,
And Scotland's realm from ruin. [*Rizzio rises.*
King! unseal
Your eyes: behold the throne encompass'd round
With treachery and treason.

Ruth. [*Starting up, draws his dagger.*] Silence—
Slave!

Mor. [*Staying him, aside.*] Not now the time.

Riz. [*Delivers to the Queen the transcripts of the bonds.*] Receive, my gracious mistress,
The last, last tribute of thy grateful servant,
These bonds. 'Tis Rizzio's farewell legacy.
These, underneath Earl Morton's roof, were found.
Earl Morton fully can the rest unfold.

Mor. How found?

Riz. Suffice not these? you see the proofs.

Mor. Who brought them?

Riz. Never shall my voice reveal
His name who brought them. For his truth I answer.

Queen. [*attentively considering them.*] 'Tis Morton's hand. Fix on the king my crown!

Recall Earl Murray! does my lord the king
Know of these dark designs?
Mor. Let Morton answer.
These are forg'd instruments.
Queen. [*To Morton.*] I'll prove the truth.
Thy faith or guilt shall now be clearly shown.
Give him the deed [*To the Secretary.*] that dooms to banishment
Or death, the rebels. As the act of all,
Sign it, Earl Morton, else—thou art a traitor.
Ruth. [*Aside.*] Ere that deed pass, blood, blood shall flow.
Mor. [*Signs it.*] 'Tis sign'd.
See Morton's name. Who doubts his loyalty?
Queen. [*Aside.*] I yet suspect his guilt.
Riz. This is your hand,
My lord—and—
Mor. I'll not answer thee, base slanderer.
Ruth. Must we then bear his insolence? arrest him.
Wait not the law's slow sentence. Vengeance!
Lords. [*Drawing their daggers.*] Vengeance!
Queen. Traitors, desist.
Both. Lord Ruthven! curb thy rage.
King. Bothwell!
Both. My liege!
Mor. [*Aside to the king.*] Let not the king be troubled.
Rizzio shall surely perish, but not here.
Ruth. [*Advancing to strike Rizzio.*] Vengeance!
Both. [*Draws his sword and interposes.*] Who strikes that man, encounters Bothwell.

Queen. Brave Earl! lead thou the way. Break up the council.

[*To the King.*] And wilt thou not return?

King. The crown!

Queen. Farewell.

Approach, my faithful servant—I will guard thee—
Fear not—who aims at Rizzio, wounds his sov'reign.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT THE THIRD.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Queen's Apartment.

QUEEN *and* SIWARD.

Siw. The king requests a conference with your highness.

Queen. Speed, Siward: say, impatiently I wait
His welcome presence. [*Siward goes.*] To this roof return!
Thus, unrequested! has the fatal truth
Flash'd on his soul conviction? grace, ye saints,
My lip with soft persuasion, that each word
May breathe of love and bliss, and in his heart
Re-animate the spark of heavenly flame
That lights the soul to glory.

The KING *enters.*

Henry! welcome,
Thrice welcome to this roof! what blissful cause
Thus greets me with thy presence?

King. Ask thy heart.
Will it not echo mine that oft has sigh'd
At our long separation?

Queen. Do I hear thee?
Can this be mockery? if it be delusion,
Yes—I will cherish it.

King. I am not blameless:
Youth, and rash spirits, and th' impatient mind,
Are evil counsellors—

Queen. [*Interrupts him.*] On all the past
Let dark Oblivion rest eternally,
While on Hope's brilliant star we fix our gaze,
And in the lustre of its light embellish
Futurity's fair vision.

King. [*Kneels and kisses her hand.*] Thus I clasp
Pardon and peace.

Queen. Add—happiness. Oh, Darnley,
I am a very woman, and was cast
By nature in that mold, wherein—'tis said—
Love forms the female heart. It is thy Mary
Whose lip now presses on thy offer'd hand,
A kiss more warm than penitence ere sought,
Or ever seal'd cold pardon. Yes, my husband,
Let me gaze on thee. Art thou not the same
As in that blissful hour when first we met?
When the preventive voice of fame had rumour'd
That heav'n decreed our nuptials: that young Darnley,
Of royal blood, of rare accomplishments,
In air, in shape, majestic grace and beauty,
Sole equall'd Scotland's Mary. Thus we met:
And ere my tongue had pow'r to form the utterance,
My heart exclaim'd, "on that brave arm, the woman
"Shall rest her weakness, from that eye of fire,
"Draw the keen spirit that shall daunt the rebel,
"And light a realm to glory."

King. I am thine—
The sun, by looking on the world, creates

Fruits and fair flow'rs, and in their hues admires
The beauty it imparts. So look on me,
And gift me with thy graces.
Queen. Henry! Henry!
Before thee bright the path of glory beams.
Love kindly sever'd us the more to heighten
The bliss of reconcilement.
King. I am blest.
And yet there are cold-blooded men, who doubt
If Mary yet love Darnley. Now, confound them.
'Tis not to gratify an idle pride,
No vain distinction moves me: what I covet
Shall 'stablish by my strength your kingdom's glory.
Queen. And can you doubt my prompt compliance?
Speak.
King. Why does a shadowy sceptre mock my grasp?
Why are my brows, as in derision, girt
By the crown's glittering bauble?
Queen. How?
King. Be mine
The grace, the dignity, the pow'r that guards
The matrimonial crown. Honour thyself
In honouring me, thy choice.
Queen. [*Aside.*] Was it for this
His lip dropt honey? let me not so deem it.
Beware—it is a dangerous gift: 'tis pregnant
With unknown evil.
King. Grant, at my entreaty,
Grace and free pardon to the rebel lords.
Queen. You know not what you ask. Bad men
betray you.

Seek you the matrimonial crown, and with it
Grace and free pardon to the rebel lords,
Who from thy brow will rend it?
King. I have weigh'd,
With cautious fore-sight, weigh'd each word I spoke.
If love be firmly rooted in thy heart,
If no feign'd passion, now comply. Yet—further—
Queen. [*Interrupting him.*] Is there aught else?
King. A trifle—
Rizzio's exile.
Queen. Be that request unsaid. He is a stranger;
My smile his sole protection.
King. Ha! confess it.
I do enforce the word. Cast out the slave.
How—hesitate—I hate the man. That minion,
Like a malignant spirit hovers round you.
He pays no court to me: in secret thwarts me:
In public slights: and shall I tamely brook it?
Queen. You know him not. Rizzio reveres his king:
And, had he e'er unweetingly offended,
Mercy, not vengeance, best becomes a monarch.
Yet—if again thou urge it, at thy pleasure
Rizzio shall quit the realm.
King. Such as he came,
A roofless vagrant, stript of all his plunder.
Queen. That must not be. It never shall be said,
That Scotland's queen to beggary and contempt
Cast off her faithful servant.
King. Shall this minion
To the wide world triumphantly expose

The beauteous Mary's gifts, and Darnley's shame?
Your cheek has lost its colour. Why thus tremble?
By heav'n you love the man.
Queeen. What means the king?
I cannot but esteem him. I have found him
Wise, zealous, loyal: and, in time of trouble,
When others have abandon'd me, his firmness
Gave to my soul new confidence.
King. Ha! own'st thou
To me thy love?
Queen. I am not wont thro' fear or fraud, to veil
The feelings of my heart. So have I lov'd him,
That I to Darnley and to heav'n avow it.
King. Will you not understand me?
Queen. No—I would not.
King. I say you love him with unlawful passion.
Queen. Go, ill-starr'd youth.
King. Why this affected calmness?
Queen. Ratest thou a queen's, a wife's, a matron's honour,
By thine own base conceptions? hence.
King. Adultress.
Queen. Shame—shame.
King. He shall not live.
Queen. I will protect him.
King. He dies.
Queen. Wrong thou that lone defenceless stranger,
And I for ever from my soul cast off
Thee, Darnley, and thy memory.
King. Thy minion
Dies.

BOTHWELL *enters.*

Queen. Bothwell, here!

Both. [*To the queen.*] Methought I heard the queen—
Command me.

Queen. Darnley, hence. We meet no more.
[*Queen goes.*

King. The bond is sign'd. Swear thou, ere one fleet hour
Shall pass away: I know their secret haunt,
The private cabinet within her chamber:
This master key commands the palace—Bothwell,
Swear thou, ere one fleet hour shall pass away,
That Ruthven, and Earl Morton, with armed men,
In secret, on the threshold of her chamber,
Stand watchful of my step, when loud I stamp,
To rush before th' adultress, and there strike
Her insolent minion.

Both. Ruthven shall not fail.

King. [*Gives the bond to Bothwell.*] The bond is sign'd.—Ere one fleet hour, all arm'd.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the Queen's Cabinet. Servants and Pages setting on the Supper.

1 *Serv.* They will surprise us, yet, ere all is ready. Dispatch, dispatch.

2 *Serv.* 'Tis all in order now.
Mind how you pass that way: be not too hasty:

Be wary of your steps. This scanty room
Doth not admit of carelessness. I warn you,
Thou luckless page—if you brush down that lute,
Or mar its music: will you not observe me?
'Tis Rizzio's favourite: if a wire but snap,
'Twill much displease the queen. I hear their steps:
Let us begone.

QUEEN, *Lady* ARGYLE, *and* RIZZIO, *enter.*

Queen. Nay—brood not in dull gloom.
Come—gentle sister! Rizzio—here—be seated—
I would awhile forget all care and sorrow,
And feast on my own fancies. [*Aside.*] I must feign
The mirth I feel not, or my tears will gush.—
Sister, give me the lute.

Riz. Your words are gay—
Your looks accord not with them—gracious lady!
Are you, in deed, in very truth, light-hearted?

Queen. Nay—you yourself shall answer your own question.
A memory of my girlish days comes o'er me,
I know not why: 'twill help you to an answer.
When I was yet a little child, at Paris,
One eve, at court, for Henry ever lov'd
To list my childish prattle, near him stood
A brave old mariner, of slender frame,
Keen-ey'd, his cheek by winds and suns embrown'd:
His ample forehead in its furrows bore
Signs of deep thought, and brunt of many a tempest,
But—on his placid brow sat manifest

The spirit that bad storms and death defiance,
Calm resolution. Close I noted him:
For thoughtless as I seem'd, his tale at once
Found to my young heart entrance.

Riz. What the tale?

Queen. 'Tis simple. In a tempest, nigh the rocks,
His native shore, he, sole of all the crew,
Dar'd trust his body to the surge that rav'd
Among the cliffs. Heav'n crown'd his trust with life.
There, as he rested on a rock, he saw
Beneath him, in the wide and windless depth
Of the huge sweep of the ocean roll, the ship,
A wreck, fast sinking: but ere yet the wave
Clos'd o'er it, in the momentary pause
And lulling of the tempest, on his ear
From that deep bosom of the ocean, rose
On sudden in one roar of many voices,
A wild, yea—wanton song: as if the men
Now certain of their fate, with one consent
Had vow'd, ere death, to drown all fear of dying
In Bacchanalian chorus. So they perish'd.
Say, are you answer'd?

Riz. Yes—too well. Despair
Has forc'd this light mood on you.

Queen. Take your lute.
Why do you strike those dismal chords?

Riz. The hand
Betrays the soul.

Queen. Come, come, a lighter prelude. How you mock me?

The wires are all untun'd, or your strange trembling
Mars all their music.

Riz. No light air, I pray.

Queen. A soothing air, then. Oft the lay of woe
Is medicine to deep anguish, as, 'tis said,
The honey of the bee will in its wound
Assuage the venom. Try my favourite air,
Thy modulation to the song that heard
The sorrow of my soul, as on the deck
Where I had wept all night, at dawn I sat,
And strain'd my longing eyes that bad farewell
To the gay land that made my young heart joy,
To France, fast fading from me.

Riz. 'Tis in vain.
My soul is out of tune.

[*The king's step is heard ascending the stairs.*
Heard you that sound?

Queen. What sound?

Riz. Again!

Queen. Methinks I hear a footstep.

Riz. Hark! hark, how heavily it labours up
The private stairs.

Queen. None here can entrance find—
Yet—I distinctly hear it—how—a key
Grates, forcing back the wards —

C. of Ar. I'll bar the door.

The KING *enters.*

Queen. Haste—'tis too late—

Riz. It is the king.

King. No—Darnley—

It is but Darnley—Be not discompos'd —
There was your seat, your custom'd place. Sit, Rizzio —
Riz. Not in your presence —
King. In the queen's you sat :
She is more king than I am. Slave ! be seated.
[*Forces him to sit.*
Queen. [*aside.*] He dares not in my presence —
King. [*to the Queen.*] Be not vex'd,
That here you see an uninvited guest.
[*Aside.*] By this time they are come.
Riz. I hear the tread
The heavy jarring tread of armed men.
King. Heard you their jarring tread ? Come, crown your glass,
To Mary, Scotland's sovereign, beauteous Mary ;
And, when I stamp upon the pavement, thus,
[*he stamps.*
Drink, drink it down.

RUTHVEN *in armour, and armed followers enter.*

Riz. [*to the Queen.*] Protect me—save thy servant!
Queen. Yes, at life's peril — Who art thou ? Why arm'd ?
Wherefore that unsheath'd sword ? Who art thou?
Ruth. [*Lifting up his helmet.*] Ruthven —
Queen. Why here, Earl Ruthven ?
Ruth. To obey the king —
Come forth, base minion—Thou, whose ill-gain'd wealth

Makes poor the plunder'd realm; whose insolence
Outswells thy base rapacity: whose faith,
Hostile to ours, each foreign pow'r prefers
To Scotland's weal, and Scotland sons — Come forth.
I, Ruthven, for an injur'd realm claim vengeance.
King. Add too, that base-born peasant, that vile minion
Has Scotland's king dishonour'd —
Riz. King, 'tis false —
Queen. [*to the King.*] Thou dost degrade thyself, dishonouring me —
Earl Ruthven! hence: or dread a traitor's doom.
I am thy sovereign —
Ruth. I obey the king
King. Strike, Ruthven!
Queen. On my knees I beg his life—
King. Adultress! no—Thy minion dies.
Riz. Oh shield me.
Queen. [*to the King*] Oh! by that life which soon will see the light,
Thy unborn babe that at my heart-strings pulls,
Save him. [*King gives Ruthven a dagger.*
King. Strike, Ruthven! with this dagger strike him—
Queen. Traitor, desist—
[*The Queen rushes before Rizzio. Ruthven and his followers struggle with him.*
Riz. There is no hope—no refuge —
King. [*seizing hold of the Queen.*] Now force him from her.

Riz. [*to Ruthven.*] Cease, barbarian, cease—
Grasp not her arms: on her no violence —
[*Rizzio goes, followed by Ruthven.*
Strike, but not here—[*to the Queen.*] Farewell! farewell! for ever—

Queen. Hear, for thy soul's sake, mercy!—Ruthven! spare him!

Ruth. [*Behind the scenes.*] Die — die —

Riz. [*Behind the scenes.*] Saints! guard her life.

Queen. [*to the King.*] Hence, ruthless murderer!

END OF ACT THE FOURTH.

ACT V. SCENE I.

The Queen's Apartment.

QUEEN *and* ARGYLE.

Queen. Peace to thy spirit! rest, lamented friend!
Ah! hapless Rizzio! dearer to my soul,
Now, while I weep thy loss, than in those hours
When like a guardian saint, thy keen-ey'd wisdom
Illum'd my path: far dearer to my soul,
Than when thy converse chas'd away my woe,
Or thy persuasive song like breath'd enchantment
Call'd fancy from her inmost cell, and fill'd
Her visions with sweet wonder.
C. of Ar. Be consol'd.
Queen. [*Seeing Rizzio's Lute.*] That lute! ha! take it hence! that was my gift.
Conceal it from my sight. [*Argyle takes it into the inner room.*] Ne'er may I hear
Again those chords which once had pow'r to sooth
The anguish of my spirit! each vibration,
Will ring of Rizzio's loss, of Rizzio's murder,
Of Rizzio's groan of death.

ARGYLE *enters faltering.*

C. of Ar. Help—help. I faint—
'Tis fill'd with armed men, and the fresh blood
Yet streams upon the floor. 'Tis Rizzio's blood.

Queen. Fear not. They shall not harm thee in my presence.

C. of Ar. Not fear! they murder'd Rizzio in thy presence.

Queen. Dost thou reproach me too, my sister?

C. of Ar. Pardon:
I know not what I spake; my fear o'erpow'r'd me.

Queen. Their queen, their prisoner! none to aid their sov'reign?
I had a husband once—but Rizzio's murder
Has from my soul eras'd him.

Bothwell heard behind the scenes. Guards! depart.
Hence—I command you.

Queen. Bothwell!—go, my sister,
Entreat him to my presence. [*Argyle goes*] Hapless Mary!
And must I rest on him? Ah—Murray! Murray!
My brother, where art thou? in arms, a rebel
Against thy queen and sister.

Both. [*behind the scenes.*] Gracious Countess,
Say, I will quickly come.

ARGYLE *enters.*

C. of Ar. The Earl but waits
To see the body of thy servant, Rizzio,
Borne decently away, and that no stain
Of murder shock thy sight.

Queen. Have they then borne
The body off? 'T would soothing be, tho' painful,
To breathe o'er Rizzio's corse a farewell pray'r,
A requiem to his spirit.

C. of Ar. Go not there:
Oh shun that scene of horror.

BOTHWELL *enters.*

Queen. Welcome, Earl!
I did entreat your presence.
Both. I beseech you
Now yield me secret audience.
Queen. [*Aside to Argyle.*] How refuse him?
A little while here leave us. Go not far:
Speed at my call. [*Argyle goes.*]
Both. A melancholy office,
But one I deem'd not thankless to my sov'reign
Awhile detain'd me. Pardon my delay.
I wait my sov'reign's will.
Queen. Say, my entreaty—
Such reverence now seems insult. You behold
The sov'reign of your kingdom in her palace,
A guarded prisoner!
Both. Scotland's queen, a prisoner,
And Bothwell living!—All who bear with me
Name or affinity, the meanest hind
Of Bothwell's clan, to rescue thee, their sov'reign,
Would gladly die.
Queen. I still have found you loyal.
Both. Ere I beheld your heav'nly charms, I vow'd
Faith and obedience unto Scotland's queen:
But at my eye's first glance, I freely own
That faith, obedience, subject's loyalty
But ill exprest my ardour.

Queen. Armed men
Now fill my cabinet; they watch me, hear me:
I am a prisoner.
Both. No. At Bothwell's bidding—
Queen. [*interrupts him.*] At Bothwell's bidding—
Your's!
Both. They, all, retir'd.
Queen. And—am I free?
Both. Command.
Queen. Here guard the king,
The victim of base traitors—Darnley! Darnley!
How could'st thou doubt my love? Deluded youth!
Not thirst of blood, not cruelty of nature,
Keen Jealousy's infuriate demon plung'd
Thy blade in Rizzio's breast.
Both. Seek not to see him:
Dark Morton sways his soul. But now I left him
Slav'd by his fear, his fitful fury cool'd,
The more dejected, like his favourite bird,
That in the ardour of pursuit, too far
Out-soar'd its wonted flight, then, earthward flutter'd
With feebler wing dispirited. Forget him.
While here the majesty of Scotland wept
Unpitied, unaveng'd, that boy—
Queen. [*interrupting him.*] Earl Bothwell,
He is thy king.
Both. Not, since that foul offence,
Treason to love and Scotland. Royal lady!
All must be known: while here you wept a prisoner,
That rash boy sped his missive letters forth,
Recalling Murray.

Queen. Am I free ?
Both. The states
Are by his will dismiss'd.
Queen. I, Scotland's sovereign !
Both. No, thou art not: thou must bow down to Darnley,
And at his footstool kneel, and supplicate
His grace, and sue remission for thy crimes.
I have perus'd the deed ; 'tis vow'd, 'tis sign'd
In Rizzio's blood—
Queen. What deed ?
Both. Stern Ruthven, Morton,
Have sworn, on Darnley's head to fix and guard
The matrimonial crown.
Queen. And wrest from me
The sceptre ?
Both. Yes : and—far more dear to thee
Than crown or sceptre, yea than life itself,
Thy honor. If thy foe's fell malice prosper,
Thy name to after ages shall become
A bye-word and contempt. The mother's guilt
On the fair front and sinless brow of childhood
Shall brand th' adultress' shame—
Queen. Bothwell, begone :
Thy presence is offence—
Both. Thou must attend—
The storm now bursts upon thee, and alone
One who has lov'd thee long, but ne'er till now,
Till that this hand had strength and power to shield thee,
Pour'd forth his soul—

Queen. [*interrupting him.*] Insulting traitor! hence—
Away—
Both. What other arm than mine can save you?
Queen. A people's — To the nation I appeal.
Their pow'r the column that supports the throne.
The sovereign, on her realm who shower'd her blessings,
Shall never in the season of distress
Be of that realm abandon'd. Hence!
Both. Yet, hear me—
I speak the general wish, the will of all:
Divorce 'twixt thee and Darnley —
Queen. Never, never —
Insulting traitor, hence! I'll hear no more.
Ho! Argyle! — Traitor, hence —

ARGYLE *enters.*

Both. [*going.*] Darnley shall perish —
When next we meet—'tis fated,—'tis decreed:
Scotland's proud queen kneels Bothwell's wedded slave. [*Bothwell goes.*
Queen. 'Tis clear—The traitor has unmask'd his guilt—
Argyle, if e're thy sovereign was rever'd,
If e're thy sister in thy heart embosom'd,
Take this, my nuptial ring; speed, seek the king,
Heav'n, and the night's dark mantle thy protection!
I do mistrust their violence. Entreat him,
Charge him from me, if yet he value life,

To leave that lonely dwelling—Speed! I charge thee— [*Argyle goes.*
I would exchange a last forgiveness with him—
If he must perish, let him in these arms
Breathe his last sigh: with him his wife shall fall,
And Heav'n avenge our murder—Ruthless man!
My soul is filled with horror—Siward, Siward!
[*He enters.*
I will not here remain — Thy arm, good Siward—
Guide thou my step—Protect him, gracious heav'n!

Scene changes to a desolate spot, near the Kirk of Field.

HAY, HEPBURN, *with a dark lantern, cloaks, and vizors.*

Hay. This is the place.—Here, by the ruin'd wall,
Where the huge buttress props it up from falling—
Is it not past the time?
Hep. The abbey chimes
Have plainly mark'd the hour, 'twixt one and two.
Hay. I have watch'd here since midnight—Keen the air:
Most piercing cold: the sleet-storm drives apace;
And, but for this good mantle, I had lain
A frozen corse on earth —And, might I speak it—
Hep. [*interrupting him.*] Hist! — hist!
Hay. I know you'll call me woman-hearted,
Yet, would that I had lain a frozen corse
Ere hazarded this deed —

Hep. Five hundred crowns
Twice fairly reckon'd up—one thousand crowns,
And an Earl's favour. Thou art woman-hearted.
Methinks I heard a foot-fall. No.
Hay. 'Tis horrid—
From its foundation blow the house in air!
And must the king so perish?
Hep. That I know not.
The Earl—hist! hist! his word will all disclose.
Hay. It will be heavy on my soul for ever,
Yet his the guilt.

BOTHWELL *softly enters.*

Both. Hist! Hepburn! Hay! make answer.
Hep. We wait your will.
Both. Where are the vizors?
Hep. Here.
Both. The mantles?
Hep. Here? [*holds up the lamp.*
Both. We must alike be cloth'd.
Hepburn, is all as I commanded, done?
Hep. Strict to your bidding.
Both. And the train drawn out
Beyond the wall, close to the garden's edge?
Hep. Up to the garden's edge. Touch but the train,
The house, walls, vaults, foundation stones, all, all,
Vanish in air.
Both. 'Tis well. Hay, hast thou done
Alike thy part? hast thou to feast and song
Entic'd his few attendants?

Hay. Ere this hour
They stagger in their cups. The king, my lord,
Lies at your mercy. And—might I—unblam'd,
Whisper one pitying word. Think on his youth—
It is a dreadful deed.

Both. Hay, look on this. [*Drawing a dagger.*
Obey, nor speak, save when I give command.
Hear my last orders. When the abbey clock
Strikes two—'tis near the time—we, thus disguis'd,
Rush to the lonely room, and seize the man,
There bind him, and so leave him to his fate.
Now, strictly mark me: by your lives I warn you,
Utter no word: no sound, no whisper heard.
But—Hepburn, when the abbey clock strikes two,
When its last echo dies among the hills,
I charge you, Hepburn, five fleet minutes pause;
That we, fore-warn'd, may ere the mine is sprung,
Fly from the spot: then, fire the train—mean-while
At different parts, we round the garden watch
That none approach. 'Tis time. Hush, hush, be cautious,
The city's nightly guard now walk their round.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the King's-House, in the Kirk of Field.

KING *staggers in alarmed.*

King. I cannot rest. I will not to my couch.
Again it glides before me. Hence! avaunt!
Spare me, ye ministers of vengeance, spare me!
Was it not palpable? I heard his groan.
On me, on me, the spectre turn'd his gaze:
'Twas Rizzio: such I saw him, as he writh'd
And hung upon the queen, and gaz'd on me,
When Ruthven's quivering dagger gleam'd before him.
There, there—again it glides before me. Lo!
It beckons me to follow.

Countess of ARGYLE *enters.*

What art thou,
A spectre, or a being of this earth?
Speak to me.

C. of Ar. Let my liege behold this ring—
From Scotland's queen I come, and bear her words.
Speed, if thou value life: quit this lone roof—
Fly to her arms for refuge.

King. Can the queen
Forgive the past? Pour on her brow, ye saints,
Celestial blessings!

C. of Ar. Speed, my lord, delay not.
I must not linger here. [*Argyle goes.*
King. Haste. Say I come—
I come—I will but fling this mantle round me.
Keen is the night-air. Hark—a heavier step
Ascends the stairs.

Three Persons enter disguised.

Who are you? ho—my train.
[*After struggling, the King is overpowered.*
Help—treason—murder—do you seek my life?
Will you not answer? Is my wealth your aim?—
You know me not, a kingdom's wealth my ransom.
Bind me not so, so close: I will not struggle,
I do not struggle. Sirs, have mercy on me!
If you are men, if not infernal spirits,
Let me but hear your voices.
Say you will murder me: so you but speak it.
I know you—Rizzio sent you: you are ris'n
Fiends from the under world before the time,
To torture here your victims. Gone—oh hear me!
[*They leave him bound—door barred on the outside.*
Murderers, or spirits of the dead, return!
Leave me not thus in lonely horror! hear me!
So did I turn from Rizzio's piercing cry.—
'Tis dreadful retribution. Blood claims blood.

Scene changes to another part of the Garden.

QUEEN *and* SIWARD *enter with torches.*

Queen. [*Rushing in.*] Siward, speed on. I am not wearied! Haste!
I care not for the gust and freezing night-air.
What was that sound?

[*The Abbey clock strikes two.*

Siw. The abbey clock struck two.

Queen. I am not wearied. Hold the lamp before me.
Speed on. Where art thou, Argyle? why delay?
Hark! hark—a footstep. Is it thine, my sister?

[*One of the persons, disguised, rushes by her.*

Was I deceiv'd? one in swift pace rush'd by me.
Speak, Argyle, speak!

HAY *rushing in.*

Hay. Away—away—or perish.
If that thy life is dear, fly, fly this spot.

Queen. Why fly? who art thou? speak. Thy queen commands.

Hay. Oh heav'n's! the queen!—away. The king now dies.
Speed, if kind saints yet grant one fav'ring moment.

The mine is charg'd, the train is laid. Away—
A demon counts the moment, Fly—'tis fir'd.
[*The mine explodes.*
The wreck will crush us.
Queen. Let me here expire.
[*Falls on the earth, amid the bursting fragments.*

THE END.

IVAN,

A TRAGEDY

IN

FIVE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Men.

Ivan, *the deposed Emperor of Russia.*
Count Naritzin, *Governor of Schlusselburgh.*
Count Rimuni, *Favourite of the Empress.*
Galinovitz, *Sub-governor.*
Mirovitz, *an Officer on guard in the Fort.*
Feodor, *his Brother, ditto.*
Galvez, *Servant of Naritzin.*
Altorf, *Servant of Rimuni.*
Narshkoff and two sons, *Fishermen.*
Ortosk, *Sentinel.*

Senators, Conspirators, Soldiers.

Women.

Elizabeth, *Empress of Russia.*
Petrowna, *Wife of Count Naritzin.*

Place, the Fort of Schlusselburgh, an isle in the Neva.

Time, fourteen hours.

IVAN.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The exterior of the Fort, on the margin of the Neva, Behind, the Castle and Towers of Schlusselburgh.

MIROVITZ *enters.*

Miro. 'Tis now the morning-watch—from tow'r to tow'r
Hark! round yon fort's wide circuit, loudly rings
The voice of challeng'd sentinels. The time,
Th' appointed hour is past. Methinks, I hear
Advancing steps.—'Twas but the Neva's flood
That round this isle, the abode of woe and horror,
Whirls its swift eddies.

FEODOR *enters.*

Feodor—my brother.
Speak—Feodor?
Feo. The same.
Miro. Why this delay?

Feo. 'Tis ever thus—thy fervent spirit outruns
Th' appointed time.
Miro. Speed! speed, ye hours of vengeance!
Oh that night's thickest clouds were gather'd round me!
Till then where hide my deep disgrace?
Feo. Be patient.
Miro. Say, was it slight th' offence, that here, so long,
In these drear haunts, doom'd for my sire's misdeeds,
I still have serv'd inglorious? wrong on wrong—
Insult on insult! nay—'tis known to all,
That when the ruthless minion, proud Rimuni,
Had of his honour'd charge depriv'd Naritzin,
On me by right and ordinance of service,
Devolved the care of Ivan. Vain my claims.
Galinovitz, it seems, has won their favour;
A stripling, in his boy-hood, o'er my brow
Rais'd as in mockery. Be swift vengeance mine!
Deep, deadly as their outrage.
Feo. Mirovitz,
'Tis in thy power. The guard who serve the night-watch,
Now, at my word assembled, wait thy bidding,
In secret, in the cavern, delv'd beneath
The western bastion, whose huge bulk drives back
The wint'ry floods. But not on them alone
Our hope is fix'd: all whom this isle contains,
At thy first summons will arise in arms
To free Naritzin. Such his kindly rule,
That when the herald's voice aloud proclaim'd

That here the Empress and Rimuni meet
This day to seal his doom, the cry of wrath,
Of vengeance, and revolt, rang round the isle.
Go forth—and head the tumult.

Miro. Feodor,
The rage and uproar of the populace
Burst like the tide, whose refluent waves, ere long,
Die off unheard: not such my course of vengeance.
Its progress like the Neva's ceaseless stream,
That gathering up its strength from thousand rills
Sweeps onward, without ebb, and undermines
The tower whose shadow slumbers on its bosom
In proud security. My art shall gain
To serve my deep revenge, all who this night
Hold watch and ward o'er Ivan.

Feo. Speed, and prosper. [*Exeunt.*

Scene the Second. A Cavern outside the Ramparts.

CONSPIRATORS.

Con. He comes not. Hence.

Con. Stay, comrades! wherefore dread
In Mirovitz, delay? you, who so oft
Witness'd his valour, first to mount the breach,
Or singly scale the fortress?

Con. Hark, some step
Approaches. Comrades! on your guard: be watchful!
Nearer it hastens: on your guard, I say—
Now boldly challenge. [*They draw their swords.*

MIROVITZ *and* FEODOR *enter.*

Con. Friend or foe? advance not.

Feo. 'Tis Mirovitz.

Miro. Put up your swords, brave comrades!
Say, are all present? Theodore, I see,
Norkots, and Ostralof, and brave Nagotzin.
I greet thee, bold Truwarotz, Sulskoi, too,
And Voronetz, who never fled from man.

Feo. Behold them, brave, determin'd; speak thy will.

Miro. My will! not so: 'tis loyalty, 'tis honour
Points out their path. Comrades, the prisoner, Ivan,
Is Russia's rightful Emperor. 'Tis your king
Claims vengeance. By his wrongs, his woes, I urge you:
Recall to mind, the day which hail'd him monarch,
Saw him a helpless prisoner; call to mind,
How, on from fort to fort, they dragg'd their victim,
Ere to this spot accurst, this last abode
Of horror and despair, Rimuni doom'd him
As one entomb'd alive, in yon drear cell
To moulder limb by limb. No beam of day
Ere glimmers on the cell that hears his groan:
And, till renown'd Naritzin here held charge,
'Tis known to all—the fierce barbarians tortur'd
His tender limbs. The sentinels on watch,
Tho' us'd to blood and groans of horrid death,
Have quak'd to hear his night-shriek.

Con. We will free him.
Fix thou the hour.

Miro. First, yield me patient hearing.
You all revere Naritzin.
Con. Yes—as children
Honour a father.
Miro. You would shed your blood
To rescue him from wrong.
Con. Most willingly.
Miro. Naritzin cannot brook such deep disgrace.
Thus wrong'd by her. Her—on whose brow his hand
Once fix'd the crown! if fam'd Naritzin join us,
The realm would rise in arms.
Con. Lead to Naritzin—
Miro. [*stopping him.*] Yet stay.
Say, brave associates, if the lord Naritzin
Decline our proffer'd aid, are all resolv'd
To free their sov'reign?
Con. We will rescue Ivan,
Or bravely perish. On—
Miro. Yet—ere we speed,
Pledge we a soldier's faith, a soldier's honour,
That in this cave, ere night-fall, once again
We meet, to fix the hour, and give to each
Fit charge and separate station.
Cons. Yes—ere night-fall,
Here we will meet. To thee we freely pledge
A soldier's honour. Lead us forth.
Miro. Brave comrades,
I lead where glory summons: fearless follow.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene the Third. A rocky shore on the margin of the Lake, overlooked by a Bastion of the Fort.

NARSHKOFF *and his two* SONS *enter, and spread a Net on the Rocks.*

Son. [*to his brother.*] Cheer you, my brother: here awhile take rest:
You are o'er-tir'd: here in the sun repose.
Narsh. Give me the net, and I will spread it out,
And on the smooth rock dry its dripping meshes:
So, if perchance some soldier cross our way,
We shall not breed suspicion, but may seem
Intent on our day labour.
[*He looks round earnestly.*
Son. Tell me, father,
Why do you seem disturb'd? what care comes o'er you?
Why point to yon dark nook?
Narsh. We have o'er-shot it.
Look, my brave boys, our tough oars have o'er-shot
The little creek—'Tis there, beneath that rock,
Where yon huge birch bow'd down by weight of years
Hangs o'er the Neva.
Son. 'Tis a cheerless spot,
Gloomy as night—
Narsh. That was th'appointed place;
There we must anchor our light skiff, and wait

The signal—When, at night, the torch thrice waves
On yon tall eastern turret—look—
Son. I note it—
Narsh. At the third signal, at a moment's warning
All must be ready : we must hoist the sail
If fair the breeze : if foul, brave boys, your sinews
Must not refuse to labour at the oar,
Till our good vessel o'er Ladoga's lake
Has safely wafted the entrusted charge —
It was no trifling bribe—
Son. Our life's at hazard—
Narsh. So is it, every day, when we do tempt
The wave, and cast our meshes in the flood.
Look you, so we but reach yon shore in safety
The rest of life we may carouse at will.
Take up the net—push off the boat—away—
Son. My brother is o'er-tir'd ; a little moment,
A moment rest. And, tell us, I entreat you,
Whom we must land in safety on yon shore ?
Narsh. I know not : but, no doubt, some high-born prisoner
Who has escap'd from chains.
Son. Oh ! were it Ivan,
This hand should from my arm first drop in the wave
Ere it let loose the oar. That hapless youth !
I know not why it is, whene'er I hear
His story, tho' it sorely grieve my heart,
Yet doth it chain mine ear.
Narsh. 'Tis ever so
When miseries unprovok'd command our pity.

In sooth his woe would melt a heart of stone.
Ivan is rightful emperor: he was crown'd
King in his cradle—

Son. Out—alas the day!
It had been better, father, had poor Ivan
Our brother been, and born like us to labour.
Then—he had scap'd those torturers.

Narsh. Would that Ivan
Had perish'd with the monk who lur'd him forth,
Ere to yon hideous cave the ruffians dragg'd him!
'Tis now, eight years gone by, and Ivan then
Scarce ten years old—'Twas a bleak eve, and loudly
The Neva roar'd: I never shall forget it.
Just as I moor'd my boat yon side the flood,
A band of soldiers hail'd me: loud their voice,
And fiercely, as in wrath, their swords unsheath'd
Wav'd o'er their prisoners. 'Twas a piteous sight,
And all was strife and tumult. I full fain
Had fled the spot, when one, with whose stern voice
I dar'd not parley, bad me to this isle
Ferry the prisoners, Ivan, and the monk,
Each bound in chains—

Son. The boy, their king, in chains!

Narsh. Sore manacled. The child sunk down oe'rpower'd,
Mute, motionless, save ever and anon
A big tear trickled, and a deep sigh burst
As it would break his heart. Not so the monk:
I heard his thrilling outcry, as he writh'd
And struggled with his chains, and with clench'd fist
In frantic rage oft struck his hoary temples.

And as I reach'd the fort, just as my oar
Spent its last stroke, the monk, uprising, dash'd
From either side the guard that closely grasp'd him,
Then plung'd into the flood with all his weight
Of fetters.—Never man beheld him more:
Save, yearly, on that day, that very hour
He perish'd, some have seen—

Son. Seen what? Say, father—

Narsh. His very self, that monk, so manacled,
Rise from the flood, and point with threat'ning hand
To Ivan's tow'r. But, hush! the air has ears,
And the whole isle is vex'd with vigilant spies.

[*Ortosk, a Sentinel, appears on the bastion.*

Come, let us hence —

Ort. Speak —

Son. 'Tis the sentinel!

Ort. I charge you, on your lives, say, wherefore here?
Why, on this spot?

Narsh. We are poor fishermen
Who in these waters seek by daily labour
Our hard-earn'd food. We were o'er-tir'd, good soldier,
And came to dry our nets, and rest awhile
On this smooth beach.

Ort. Away, nor loiter here.
If, when I challenge next, you here are found,
You are for life imprison'd. [*Sentinel goes.*

Narsh. Come, my boys!
'Tis dangerous tarrying here.

Son. Oh grant, kind heav'n,
That this stout oar may bear poor Ivan hence,
And I will prize it as a monarch's sceptre. [*Exeunt.*

Scene the Fourth. Naritzin's Castle.

NARITZIN.

Narit. Wrong'd by Elizabeth! thy offspring! thine,
Thou father of thy country!
Her, on whose brow this hand the diadem fix'd
Reft from the hapless Ivan! Judge of earth!
And must Naritzin's conscious lip confess
'Tis righteous retribution? Must I own
In bitterness of self-accusing misery
Th'eternal truth, "One deed unhallow'd teems
With woe engend'ring woe?" What now awaits me?
Death, or drear exile, where Siberia's snows
Shall sepulchre my bones. Oh! were it mine
Alone to suffer! But, thou ill-starr'd Ivan!
To leave thee thus expos'd! And thou, most lov'd
Petrowna, whose pure spirit did prefer
To pomp and courts, this residence of horror,
To share my doom; ah! 'tis thy secret grief
That festers in this bosom. Righteous heav'n
Heap on this head thy fury! Spare Petrowna!
Oh shield the innocent Ivan!

GALVEZ *enters.*

Galvez here!
Why thus uncall'd? [*A shout heard.*
Gal. My lord, and honour'd master,
Hark to the voice that loudly calls on you,
None, none shall injure you.
Voices without.] No pow'r on earth
Shall wrong the good Naritzin.

PETROWNA *enters.*

Narit. Ha! Petrowna!
I pray thee, love, retire.
[*to Galvez.*] Say, whence this tumult?
Gal. All whom this isle contains, th'indignant soldiers
Are risen to rescue you.
Pet. 'Tis known to all,
That here, the woman thy pow'r exalted,
She who has basely wrong'd thee, and her minion,
The insolent Rimuni, meet this day
To seal thy condemnation.
[*Voices without.*] Comrades! on—
Our swords shall guard Naritzin.
Narit. [*to Galvez.*] Go, control
Their fury.
Gal. 'Tis in vain. Their rage enflam'd,
If you deny them audience, will burst forth
In maddening insurrection.
Pet. Good, my lord,
Admit them to thy presence. Thou hast ever

Heard, and redrest their grievance. I beseech thee,
Vouchsafe them gracious hearing.
Narit. [*to Galvez.*] Give them entrance.
[*Galvez goes.*
Yes, I will curb this tumult. Aid me, heav'n!
Make firm my mind, that I may yet withstand
This dread temptation!

MIROVITZ *and* Soldiers *enter.*

Wherefore here? Why, soldiers,
This tumult? Who has injur'd you?
Miro. My lord,
You they have injur'd, basely wrong'd you. —
Hear us:
Your rule has ever been most merciful:
Your kindness and humanity have sooth'd
Th'abode of horror: and while yet our hands
Hold strength to wield a soldier's weapon, none
Shall force you from this isle.
Narit. Say, what thy purpose?
Miro. To rescue you from violence and wrong.
Narit. Thou, rescue me! Whence thy authority?
Miro. High heav'n, who wills not that the guiltless suffer:
The soul's resistless impulse to abase
Tyrannic pow'r.
Narit. Proud words but ill conceal
Disloyal deeds. Soldiers, obey: depart
Ere death repress your daring. Hence —

Sol. Speak, Mirovitz :
This is a righteous cause.
Miro. You see these veterans,
Men like myself, grey-headed, worn with service.
You know their gallant deeds.
Narit. Yes, oft have witness'd.
There's not a breast of those who now surround me
Undinted by brave wounds.
Miro. Shall then the chief
Who marshall'd us to conquest, fall a victim
To base suspicion ? No : their brave right hands
Each on his sword, are pledg'd. Speak but the word,
The cannon levell'd to announce the arrival
Of those weak tyrants, 'neath Ladoga's water
Shall plunge in all its bravery their galley
Ere it insult the fort.
Narit. I'll hear no more.
I am unarm'd, or I had plung'd my sword,
Bold rebel ! in thy heart. Hence —
Pet. Thy disgrace,
Thy wrongs inflame their souls.
Miro. At will command us :
Naritzin's word needs not a sovereign's sanction.
Narit. If then Naritzin's word has pow'r, obey it.
Soldiers, your zeal betrays you. What your purpose ?
To shield Naritzin from the iron grasp
Of merciless oppression ? How ? By deeds
Whose guilt and dire enormities outswell

The vile traducer's malice: deeds that cast
Round spotless loyalty the blood-stain'd garb
Of treason and rebellion. Here, first plunge
Your weapons, ere a mutinous arm be rais'd
To strike th'anointed brow. Revere your sov'reign!
Each to his home, in peace, and from Naritzin
Learn to submit. [*Soldiers depart.*

Miro. [*in going.*] My lord, in time of peril
Here claim redress.

[*Laying his hand on his sword.* [*Exit.*

Pet. [*advancing solemnly.*] And did I rightly
hear thee?
Submit! And didst thou speak it? Thine, that word!

Narit. None but myself shall vindicate my honour.

Pet. What thy resolve?

Narit. I will confront the accuser,
And shame the slanderous tongue.

Pet. Why rush on death?
Hear me pour forth my inmost soul, and plead
For one in hopeless anguish, one by all
Abandon'd: one, on whom no sun by day,
Nor moon nor star by night, has sent its beam:
Who for the freshness of the vital air,
Drinks foul contagion, and for human utterance,
Hears but the echo rendering back his groan,
Or pestential damps, that drop by drop
Burst on his flinty bed. I plead for Ivan.
Thou did'st permit it, in the cell unseen
Of human eye, I still'd his frantic shriek,
The while he knew not whose the voice that sooth'd
him.

I taught him to adore the awful pow'r
Whose chastisement is love: and, year by year
Matur'd his virtues, and beheld the flow'r
That cruel hands once crush'd, expanding fair
Beneath my tendance. Who shall tend him now?
The ruthless torturers?

Narit. You wound my soul.

Pet. Is mine at peace? Oh grant my pray'r. Free Ivan:
And fix him — for thou can'st — thy word has pow'r,
King on his father's throne.

Narit. I crown'd Elizabeth,
The offspring of my lord and much-lov'd master,
The father of his country. I enthron'd her,
Urge me no more.

Pet. Be witness, earth and heav'n!
Witness thyself! while on thy sacred word
Her throne in proud security repos'd,
Tho' my heart inly glow'd, my lip was silent.
Forbearance now is base servility,
Dishonouring our nature. Thou did'st crown her:
What thy reward? Rimuni's word shall answer.
Hear, and avenge! To thee, an injur'd nation
Lifts up her voice: not this abode of horror
That calls down light'ning from indignant heav'n,
But, at thy word, a realm would rise in arms,
And crush the usurper.

Narit. Oh that heav'n's wing'd fires
Had pierc'd my brow, or ere I had dethron'd
The unoffending child!

Pet. Restore him. Free
From anguish and remorse thy troubled spirit.
Narit. Hence—lest I do a deed whose mere suggestion
Rives me with horror. [*Cannon and shouts heard.*] Heard you not that sound,
Those shouts—that roar of cannon? 'Tis—
Pet. [*interrupting him.*] Th' usurper.
Narit. [*shouts and cannon repeated*] Again—
Pet. That sound announces her arrival
This side the Neva.
Narit. Now awhile, Petrowna,
Farewell. I must prepare and arm my spirit,
Pet. [*interrupting him.*] For insult, for oppression, for dire injuries
That mock the utterance. Hear my farewell word:
We may not meet again. Thou art the temple
Where honour dwelt enshrin'd, and shall thy knee
Bend at Rimuni's beck? and must Petrowna,
(Spare, spare me that disgrace!) look tamely on
And see her lord lift vainly up the hand
That crown'd and uncrown'd kings, to that base minion
A suppliant for pity?
Narit. Never—never.
Bend to Rimuni? Lift to him this hand!
Rather its strength shall o'er yon rampart wave
War's crimson standard and array the realm
In Ivan's cause. My pow'r shall yet prevail:
Thro' me the voice of truth shall reach the throne,
And silence the oppressor. I this day

Will lighten Ivan's doom: yon sun, this day
Shall see Naritzin or Rimuni perish.
Awhile farewell.

Pet. Whate'er thy doom, is mine:
Bonds, exile, death. Go thou where honour calls:
Th' oppressor shall not triumph. Ivan! reign!

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT II. SCENE I.

The outward Fort.

GALINOVITZ, MIROVITZ, FEODOR, *Soldiers under arms to receive the Empress.*

Galin. [*to Mirovitz.*] The herald is arrived. Here will the Empress
A few fleet hours remain. Ere day-light dies
All speed away, and in new pomps and pleasures
Blot out the memory of these scenes of horror.

Miro. [*aside.*] Oh that the Neva in its roaring waters
Would their proud bark ingulph!

[*Sound of trumpets.*

Galin. [*looking out.*] Behold, they come—
Gay as in festal pomp. The sun-beams gild
Their streamers, now bright-waving in the wind,
Now, as the light breeze falls, kissing in sport
The Neva's dimpled wave.

Miro. [*aside.*] Insulting pomp!
That flares portentous on these drear abodes,
Like some strange meteor that with transient glare,
Appalls mankind. [*Flourish of trumpets.*] Yon trumpets' ceaseless clamour
Proclaims their entry. [*Looking out.*] Ha! Rimuni leads her:

Look, how she leans on his proud arm, and smiles
Delighted with his flattery.

The EMPRESS, RIMUNI, SENATORS, Guards, Heralds, *enter in state.*

Sold. [*kneeling.*] Hail! long live
Elizabeth, our gracious sov'reign!
Emp. Rise—
I thank your love, and will reward your zeal.
Rim. [*presenting Galinovitz*] Galinovitz, now warden of yon fortress,
More faithful than Naritzin, kneels before you.
Deign to vouchsafe him audience!
Galin. [*laying at her feet various keys.*] Gracious Empress!
These at your feet I lay. This guards the gate
That bars the outward fortress: this secures
All that the inward moat encircles: this
The citadel: these close the prisoner's cells:
This, from the eye of man and light of heav'n,
Hides Ivan.
Rim. Lives he yet?
Galin. Yet Ivan breathes.
Rim. [*aside.*] Would he were dead!
Emp. [*to Galinovitz.*] Sir, till our further will
Resume thy charge.
Miro. [*aside to Feodor*] We must avoid suspicion.
With seeming reverence we will kneel before her.
[*They kneel to the Empress.*
Emp. Your suit—your names.

Rim. [*advancing, interrupts them.*] Ungrateful to your ear.
This, Mirovitz, that, Feodor, his brother,
Their ancestors of old were fam'd for pow'r
And loyalty: but their rebellious father
Serv'd with Mazeppa, when that faithless chief
Leagu'd with our foes against your godlike sire.
The weight of his rebellion crush'd himself
And all his race.

Miro. We long in arms have serv'd you,
And shed our youthful blood in tented fields,
Following your standard.

Rim. Vaunt not thus your duty.

Emp. Merit by loyal deeds our further favour.

Miro. We are your slaves.

[*Shouts heard at Naritzin's approach.*

Rim. [*aside.*] The proud Naritzin comes.

NARITZIN *enters, followed by* PETROWNA *closely veiled.*

Sold. [*kneeling to the Empress.*] Look down with eye of favour on Naritzin.

Rim. Peace! nor insult the royal presence.

Narit. [*kneeling respectfully to the Empress.*] Justice.

Rim. It shall not be delay'd.

Narit. My lord Rimuni,
Not unto you, Naritzin deigns appeal.
Justice, my gracious mistress!

Emp. Sir, it grieves me

To see thee thus, here in the face of day
A man accus'd, before the public eye
Disgrac'd. I leant on thee, my lord Naritzin,
As on the prop and column of my empire.
Narit. If ere my zeal, I may not add my actions,
Your favour won, now in the public presence
Declare my crime.
Rim. Before the senate answer:
There hear thy condemnation.
Pet. [*aside to Naritzin.*] Condemnation!
Be firm—farewell. [*Petrowna goes.*
Narit. Hear, Empress! on his death-bed
Your sire, my much-lov'd master, charg'd Naritzin
By many a wound, when, side by side, our swords
Bore conquest on their edge, that long as life
Yet linger'd in these veins, I should uphold
The glory of his empire, nor desert
His royal offspring. Have I disobey'd
My sov'reign's charge? Let this distinguish'd proof,
Your gift, make answer. [*A diamond cross.*] With this high reward,
When on your brow I fix'd the diadem,
You deign'd to honour me. Suspicion's breath
Must not with venemous taint pollute the breast
Grac'd by a monarch's favour. At your word
This hand resign'd my sword: a monarch's present.
Take back your gift, and grant Naritzin's pray'r,
Vouchsafe me one request, the plain demand
Of justice.
Emp. Speak.
Narit. That you, my gracious mistress,

Would deign your presence when Naritzin pleads
Before th' assembled senate.
Rim. Proud Naritzin!
Mine is the grateful task to free the sov'reign
From toils and cares of state: and I am charg'd
To search out your misdeeds.
Narit. I shall divulge
Truths bitter to thy soul, thou man of guilt.
Emp. Proclaim them—freely speak: thy sov'reign bids thee.
Narit. The image of my lord, and gracious master,
The father of his country, lives in you.
I may not here proclaim them. In your presence,
Before the senate, at their secret council,
All shall be fully told.
Emp. There, we will hear thee.
On to the council. There, my lord Naritzin,
If guiltless, at my throne, before my presence
Stand unappall'd. Thy sov'reign is thy judge.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

Scene changes to Ivan's Prison, faintly illumed with one central lamp. PETROWNA *enters with a lamp, and basket of provisions.* IVAN *asleep.*

Pet. Forgive my long delay!
Ivan—oh answer me. He hears me not,
Or, at the breath, the whisper of my word,
His voice had giv'n kind welcome—[*looking on him.*]
Deep his slumber:

Yet, at this hour, such sleep is no repose
That gently recreates nature.
Gracious heav'n!
How will his misery end? will once again
Thy beam, oh blessed sun, illume his brow?
Will he, in kindly fellowship with man,
Feel what the god of kindness has infus'd
In human hearts, responsive to the voice
Of sympathy: or must this cell for ever
Close on his unavenged wrongs?
Ivan. [*asleep.*] Petrowna!
Delay not.
Pet I am with thee—at thy side—
A deep and heavy slumber weighs him down.
Hark! in a vision, in some troublous dream
His voice did call on me. Again: 'tis hush'd
In silence and forgetfulness of woe.
Not so with me. Can voice of mortal utter
What this day may bring forth? 'Tis horror, all,
And dread suspense. Sleep on, and wake no more!
Thou, whose harsh doom of unexampled woe,
Whose very weakness and infirmity
Have link'd thee to my soul. Oh hapless Ivan!
How shall I arm my tongue, how frame my words,
How tell thee, that, this day th' usurper comes
Haply to question thee, and doom to exile
My honour'd lord, Naritzin? How prepare thee
(If but Naritzin aid the general voice)
For freedom, sov'reign'ty, or—torturing death?

Thou! whose high will man's errant thought o'er-
rules,
Guide me aright!
Ivan. [*asleep.*] No: they will trace our foot-steps.
Avoid me. Look, how slow yon monk steals on.
Fie on thee! Shame! A lye on holy lips!
Ha! gone. The swoln wave circles o'er his head:
They cannot torture him.
Pet. His frame, methinks,
High-labours, and his features, e'en in slumber,
Have lost their winning mildness. Ivan, wake.
Ivan. [*asleep.*] I cannot bear those instruments
of torture.
All, I confess it all. The monk seduc'd me.
Oh mercy, mercy, heav'n?
Pet. Ivan! wake.
Ivan. [*confused.*] Ha! Is it thou, Petrowna: none
but thou?
Pet. There is none else.
Ivan. I pray you, turn your lamp
There, steadily. No ray of light there gleams.
It may be lurking there.
Pet. 'Twas but a dream:
I heard thee, in thy sleep; forget it all.
Here is thy food, and I may yet remain
Some little time.
Ivan. Oh, ever kind, most welcome!
The visionary shapes that vex'd my slumber,
Have in thy presence vanish'd all: not so
This horror at my heart: unwonted gloom

Here presses like reality. Petrowna,
May I disclose it to thee? It would sooth,
Methinks, my woe, yet—it will pain thy bosom.
The sufferings I endure weigh heavy on thee.
How shall I thank thee?

Pet. Give me all thy woe,
So thank Petrowna.

Ivan. [*alarmed.*] Does not that lamp pass wavering by thee?

Pet. Ivan!

Ivan. [*motioning with his hand.*] So it past wavering by me. Oh, Petrowna,
It was no shadow, no unreal phantom,
Such as oft haunt my troubled sleep—I saw it
Distinctly, as now flaming there—last night,
(The day and night to me, alas, are one,
One ceaseless misery:) at the stroke of midnight,
As on my couch I laid me down, that lamp
Past on before me, wavering, as borne
By some invisible arm. Behind it stalk'd
With pond'rous tread, a form of giant stature.
I could not trace its features. In its hand
A poniard gleam'd: and, ever and anon,
A shroud that reek'd with blood-drops, floated round it.
On me, the murderer sprung: yet, yet I hear
His hideous yell: I feel his iron grasp.
But—ere the blade descended, while I writh'd
Beneath th' o'erpow'ring fiend, thou camest—

Pet. [*interrupting.*] I!

Ivan. Such as I see thee now, with seraph brightness

Illumining the gloom, and beaming on me
Rays of celestial pity. Say, Petrowna,
Wert thou thyself then near me?
Pet. No—my son:
Heed not these shadowy dreams.
Ivan. Not so, Petrowna,
For thrice I laid me down, and thrice the lamp
Past on, and ever more that form gigantic
Thro' all that long, long night, before me tow'r'd.
And, when worn out with misery, at late hour
I sank in slumber on my flinty couch,
Strange visions of past sufferings in my dreams
Confus'dly mingled.
Pet. Then I woke thee.
Ivan. Yes,
Most kindly: and all vanish'd at thy presence,
Save this strange gloom, this horror at my heart—
Give me thy hand.
Pet. Thy fever'd hand is fire:
And now the chill fit shakes thee.
Ivan. Raise me up—
My limbs sink under me.
Support me. [*Looking earnestly on her.*] Ha!
Petrowna! on thy eye-lid
The tear-drop trembles: why, why turn away?
Sure more than wonted gloom fills all the cell,
Or, if I rightly see, unwonted paleness
Has blanch'd thy cheek. Do not conceal aught from me.
All I can bear, all suffer, save the pang
That preys on thee in secret.

Pet. 'Tis for thee
Alone I feel, feel all a mother's woe.
Oh, Ivan! calm thy soul: call heav'n to aid thee.
The tongue of slander has traduc'd Naritzin:
Rimuni has accus'd him: and Galinovitz
O'er thee holds charge; my urgent pray'r has mov'd him.
I know his secret soul, it honours thee—
Ivan, be calm. This day, to these sad haunts,
The minion—base Rimuni, and—the Empress—
Ivan. [*interrupting her.*] Th' usurper! the fell fiend, who wears my crown?
Pet. Awhile forego these thoughts: no pow'r can save thee,
If such rash words reach other ear than mine.
This day, the Empress comes to doom—I fear—
My lord to exile—and—it may be—Ivan—
We ne'er shall meet again.
Ivan. Ye light'nings, strike her!
Pet. Oh give me patient hearing! It may please
The sov'reign in her pride to look on thee—
Ivan. [*interrupting.*] Oh never will her stern eye look again
On Ivan living.
Pet. Yet—if such her will,
Be mild, be gentle, then the menacing storm
May pass away unfelt.
Ivan. I will obey thee.
Would that I ne'er again might see that fiend!
No—let me but behold her, but in day-light
Stand up, and front to front, pour in her heart

The gather'd fire that inwardly consumes me:
Then—die. Her gaze of insult shall not rest
Triumphantly on Ivan.

Pet. I implore thee,
I urge thee, Ivan, by Petrowna's love,
By years of unremitted tenderness,
I do entreat thee by these tears that gush
Like life-drops from my heart—

Ivan. [*interrupting.*] Say, what thy wish?

Pet. That thou in presence of Elizabeth,
Suppress thy indignation.

Ivan. In her presence
Conceal my just abhorrence! urge it not:
I would not disobey thee.

Pet. Else, at once
Must perish all Petrowna's high-rais'd hopes.

Ivan. Oh! I will kneel before her: sue for pity.
Say, what thy hopes?

Pet. To 'stablish thee once more,
King on thy father's throne.

Ivan. Can'st thou deceive me?

Pet. Revolt rings round the isle. Where'er I past
Before me burst the shout that bad Naritzin
Raise thee to empire. While the weak usurper
Leant on Naritzin's sacred word, my soul
Suppress its ardour—but—Naritzin wrong'd,
Hope, that long slumber'd, like a giant springs
Fresh from repose, and urges on to action.
The glorious vision fires me: ne'er till now
Has bold imagination dar'd to shape
The righteous enterprize, that still deferr'd,

Transfixt my heart with agony, and bath'd
In secret tears my pillow. On Naritzin
All now depends: and if my voice—my pray'r—
If ere Petrowna's tears had pow'r to move him,
Thy hand shall wield the sceptre.

Ivan. [*with dignity.*] 'Tis my birthright.

Pet. Rule thou the empire, in thy might extend
A hallow'd sceptre o'er a willing realm,
And fix the column of a nation's strength,
A nation's glory, on the immoveable base
Of private virtue: be, in blessing, blest:
So rightly execute the awful trust
Of heav'n's anointed.

Ivan. And—oh bliss of bliss!
To be the minister of grace and mercy,
To lighten the sad load of human woe,
To rescue the oppressed, to search out
The world-abandon'd orphan, and the mourner
Who sighs in secret — and, then say, "Come forth!
"View, in your king, a father"—This, Petrowna,
Is to be God on earth.

Pet. Oh King of Kings,
Who in the soul of Ivan hast infus'd
A portion of thy spirit, guard from wrong
His sacred life!

[*To Ivan.*] Have confidence in Heaven.
I may not longer here remain unblam'd.
Farewell! forget me not: before th' usurper,
Remember thou thy promise; in her presence
Be gentle, be submissive.

Ivan. 'Tis thy bidding,
I will bow down before her.
Pet. Now—farewell—
Ivan. My mother—
Pet. My beloved son, farewell! [*Exit.*

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Hall of Council.

The Empress on her throne. Rimuni, Senators, Guards, &c.

RIMUNI.

Rim. Hear me, my royal mistress! I entreat you:
Add, I beseech you, lords! your voice to mine,
Let not Naritzin dare profane your presence,
Let not the traitor wound his sovereign's ear
With insolent speech!

Emp. No more; my word is pledg'd:
A monarch's word is sacred. 'Tis the grace
Of sovereignty, its attribute, its blessing,
That Mercy's angel-hand should still incline
The scales by Justice pois'd —

Rim. Naritzin never
Will sue for mercy.—I entreat you, hear us:
Recall your word —

Emp. No; be his speech most harsh,
'Twill be less poignant far than self-reproach.
And, sir, his former services still live
Warm in my memory.—Be my will obey'd —
Summon Naritzin —

[*Herald introduces Naritzin.*

You, my lord Rimuni,

Search out his guilt.—Yet, first, Naritzin, hear me;
Deem not thy sovereign, one who in the hour
Of injur'd majesty, no more retains
The sense and memory of deeds long past
Of loyalty and love.—Say, "I have wrong'd you:
"Your mercy I implore, forgive th'offence:"
And thou shalt find that in this injur'd bosom
Mercy doth temper justice.

Narit. Gracious sovereign,
For those whose conscience inwardly condemns them,
For guilt which dreads its doom, reserve thy mercy:
Justice alone I claim.—My lord Rimuni,
Of what am I accus'd?

Rim. Thou didst project
Ivan's escape. Day after day, fresh rumours
Disturb the court with tales of Ivan's flight,
And Ivan's friends. For, never yet were wanting,
How light soe'er the scepter'd hand that rules,
Men prone to discontent, and prompt to fill
The realm with kindred slaughter. Such the charge:
To this make answer —

Narit. What reports unvouch'd,
What slander's breath may circulate round courts,
I scorn to answer. Yet—[*to the Empress.*] I pray your patience!
May I proceed?

Emp. At pleasure—

Narit. I must date
From years long past: and, if my speech, perforce,
Tracing time's course, and manifold events,

Should lightly touch on trivial services
Heav'n pleas'd that I should render to the state:
Pardon the mention —
Emp. It shall aid thy cause —
Narit. My ancestry is known unto you all;
My fathers, in their day, for pow'r, for valour,
For loyalty renown'd.—Scarce had I gain'd
My sixteenth year, when first, at glory's voice,
Fir'd by the Emperor's fame, I drew my sword.
There are, amid this senate, who beheld
What battles then I fought, what sieges serv'd,
Ere Nystadt seal'd our conquests.
Emp. Your brave deeds
Enrich our country's annals.
Narit. In those wars
I gain'd, not lightly won, the Emperor's love:
And his fam'd guards,— tho' then the manly down
Had scarce my cheek embrown'd — obey'd my word.
The Emperor, whose course was like yon sun
Illumining the world beneath its sway,
Died in his glory. I pass o'er untold
The sovereigns, each in turn, who held the sceptre,
Till Anne bore rule. Anne nam'd her successor
Her elder sister's grandson, then an infant,
The prisoner—Ivan—May it please your highness
To state what follow'd; what Naritzin's service?
My guilt, if such disloyalty be guilt,
I freely will disclose—
Emp. [*rising.*] No trivial service—
My glowing heart shall gratefully proclaim it —

When Ivan lay an infant in his cradle,
And the whole realm was tumult, Lord Naritzin
Felt all a patriot's zeal, a patriot's dread,
Lest this our glorious empire, by the toil
Of Peter rais'd, and by his blood cemented,
Should under foreign faction, and weak sway
Of those misguided rulers, Ivan's parents,
Be wreck'd, and crumbled to a petty state.
The public voice call'd Peter's offspring forth,
Call'd me to wield the sceptre: I obey'd:
And boldly to the throne my claim advanc'd.
At dead of night when I address'd the guard
To vindicate my rights, when round me clamor'd
Tumult and madd'ning fury, when in vain
I lifted up, to awe th'infuriate throng,
That consecrated cross, then, lord Naritzin
Dwelt on my father's fame, and crown'd my brow—
Why hast thou forc'd on me th'ungrateful office
To hear thy guilt? Does then thy heart no more
Glow at the name of my immortal sire,
Nor honour in the sovereign of thy choice
His living image?

Narit. Still my soul adores
The memory of your sire, and thus [*kneels*] in you,
Reveres his hallow'd image.

Emp. [*with warmth.*] On thy faith
I firmly rest. They falsely have accus'd thee;
Break up the senate.—Reassume thy honours:
Resume thy government—

Narit. First, yield me hearing—

Rim. It may import your throne, my royal mistress!

Emp. Do not detain me.

Narit. I must pour before you
The anguish of my soul, and speak of Ivan,
That hapless prince —

Rim. Prince!—Rebel!

Narit. On thy head
That word, base traitor!—Thou, who hast misus'd
Thy sovereign's favour, else, Naritzin's claims,
And Ivan's piercing cry had reach'd the throne.
Oh miserable realm! whose ruler yields
Th'entrusted rights and duties of the sceptre
To smooth-voic'd sycophants! [*addressing Rimuni.*]
Behold our realm,
That once by Peter's god-like soul exalted
Towr'd proudly eminent, as stateliest pine,
That rooted on the ice-cleft rock, out-braves
The war of winds, and from its brow majestic
Show'rs into dust impalpable, the weight
Of winter's snows: now droops beneath the gloom
Of luxury and sloth!—Voluptuousness
Has mildew'd its fair growth, stern tyranny
Lopt each brave shoot, and foul corruption chang'd
Its sap and vital nutriment to poison
Circling thro' all its viens.—Rimuni, dread
An injur'd nation's vengeance—

Rim. [*to the Empress.*] If my zeal
Ere won thy favour, let my word confound
The traitor —

Emp. No—[*aside.*] His just rebuke—I feel it—

Plants daggers in my heart. You spake of Ivan;
Proceed —

Narit. At this Rimuni's stern command,
When savage hands had rack'd the hapless Ivan,
When his dire wrongs rang loud on every tongue,
And the deep woe that fill'd each heart, in mine
Was guilt and condemnation, then, before me,
Like a tormenting spirit, day and night
The image of the unoffending victim,
The heir of empire, by my pow'r dethron'd,
Lone, in the unsunn'd dungeon, chain'd, in tortures,
Before me rose: nor ever ceas'd the sting
Of conscience here to lodge its gather'd venom,
Till the sharp goading of remorse compell'd me,
In expiation of th'offence, to claim
This dreadful charge, and here to dedicate
To solitude and sad obscurity,
The closing of a day whose dawn was glory —
Yet, wholly not unblest, so Heav'n vouchsaf'd me
To shield the helpless from the oppressor's wrong,
And, haply, soothe, if aught on earth might soothe,
The suff'rings of the wrong'd, the outrag'd Ivan.

Rim. Wrong'd, outrag'd Ivan!

Lords. Treason—

Emp. Peace, be silent—
I too have human feelings, human pity.

Narit. Outrag'd! I spake the word. Look at this charge, [*takes a paper from his bosom.*
I would not, for thy sake, my gracious mistress,
Before the public eye produce this deed —

Once, when I claim'd the charge of Ivan, once
I by constraint perus'd it—
Emp. Lord Rimuni:
Read it—
Rim. Compel me not, my gracious Empress!
Bid me not speak what wisdom would conceal,
Nor deeds recal that after lapse of years
By seeming harshness, may too rudely wound
Thy gentle nature.
Emp. Thou dost wrong thy sov'reign—
My lord Naritzin! this imports thy honour:
Proclaim aloud the charge, that all may judge,
Blame or applaud thy conduct.
Narit. [*reads the charge.*] "Guard this Ivan—
"Close fetter'd in a dungeon's cell immure him,
"Far from the light of day, and every eye,
"Save thine. Such food as nature craves, be his.
"His mind is brutalis'd: by means that tame
"The stubborn brute, subdue his savage mood."
Emp. It bears thy signature, thy name, Rimuni.
Narit. Would that no other name that deed subscrib'd!
Emp. My name! oh heav'n—
I will'd that Ivan should be close immur'd,
Not harshly tortur'd.
Narit. [*kneels.*] Hear me!
Emp. Wherefore kneel?
Arise.
Narit. Vouchsafe me audience. If this hand
First crown'd your brow, if first I hail'd you, Empress,

Have pity upon Ivan. From this scroll
Blot out the stain and character of blood.
Not of that fiend, of thy own heart take counsel:
Then, in the splendour of your sire's renown
His sceptre wield. And oh permit that Ivan—
The wrong'd—the outrag'd—unoffending Ivan,
May in some cloister's sanctuary pass
Life's tranquil day: the peace, the public weal,
The throne's stability, your sacred life,
Claim justly such restraint: but all beyond—
Ruthless oppression.

Rim. Dar'st thou thus proclaim it
Before thy sov'reign's presence?

Narit. Sir, I speak
Under the terror of no earthly pow'r:
[*pointing up.*] There reigns my judge.

Emp. My lord Rimuni, silence.

Narit. If, haply to have sooth'd by tenderest cares
Him whom my pow'r dethron'd, be deem'd a crime,
Be on my head that guilt! the blest offence
Will whisper peace to my departing soul.
The cell, 'tis true, has Ivan's dwelling been,
Nor other eye than mine, save one on earth,
Has ever glanc'd upon him.

Rim. Ha! another—
Mark'd you his word, dread sov'reign?

Emp. [*to Naritzin.*] Who? declare it.

Narit. Petrowna. From her lip, day after day,
E'en in the tomb that sepulchres the living,
Ivan has learnt the words of wisdom, learnt
How best to temper passion, and imbib'd

The balm of heav'nly solace which religion
Mingles in misery's chalice—
Rim. [*interrupting him. Aside to the Empress.*]
The brute Ivan,
Of cultured reason! 'Tis most perilous.
Not vain the warning. Were this widely rumour'd,
Were it but whisper'd in the public ear,
The realm would rise in arms. My gracious
Sov'reign!
Bid hence the senate. I beseech you, hear me.
Emp. My spirit is sore troubled.
Rim. I entreat you,
Let me dismiss them. Loyal tho' they seem,
They must not share this counsel.
Emp. Bid them hence.
Rim. My lords! awhile retire.
[*The Senate and Naritzin depart.*
Emp. What now thy counsel?
Rim. It was no idle rumour reach'd your throne
Of Ivan's followers, and projected rescue—
All is confirm'd. And—but you do not heed me—
Emp. Be brief.
Rim. Your throne, your sacred life's at hazard.
Be judge yourself: before you, face to face,
Bid forth the boy, and witness what his nature.
His nature! Who can doubt it? Aptly tutor'd:
All mildness! All submission! But beware!
Sudden, in full-grown strength, mature for vengeance
The lion from his secret lair will spring,
And crush you in his fury—
Emp. Yes—I dread him.

Rim. Were the boy dead, then would your soul
know peace!
There are—I know the man, whose loyal zeal
Would rid you of that fear.
Emp. By murder? Never—
Rim. You—or the boy.
Emp. Oh heap not on my soul
That added guilt.
Rim. Think not Rimuni's nature
Inclines to deeds of blood. The sacred duty
To guard your life compels me.
Emp. Spare me—spare me.
Rim. I wish not Ivan's death: but say, where
breathes
On earth—I do not know that living man—
On whom my soul in fearless confidence
Can rest such perilous charge.
Emp. Yes. One I know
In whom I firmly trust.
Rim. Then I conjure you,
Bind on his soul by heav'n-attested vows,
This solemn charge, to stab without remorse
The boy, if fraud or force attempt his rescue.
Till then, as wont, within th' imprisoning cell
Closely immure him.
Emp. 'Tis most wisely counsell'd.
Bid lord Naritzin in yon cloister's cell
Attend my summons.
Rim. Lord Naritzin!
Emp. Speed.
Bid him there wait my presence. And, I charge you,

At hazard of my deep displeasure charge you,
Let none approach the spot. My will is fix'd:
Reply not: be thy sov'reign's word obey'd.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the Cave of the Conspirators.

Conspirators. MIROVITZ. FEODOR.

Con. [*to Mirovitz.*] Detain us not. Most dangerous this delay.
Now fix the hour: give each his separate charge.
But—if you doubt our word—
Miro. [*interrupting him.*] I doubt you not.
Con. On—to the altar lead us:
There pledge our souls to Ivan's cause, there bind us
To slay whoe'er withstands his sov'reign's rescue.
Behold us fix'd.
Miro. Hear then my last resolve.
You know the tyrannous custom of this fort,
Month after month, fresh troops the isle surround,
And night by night, new guards keep watch and ward
Round Ivan's cell. This night that charge is ours.
I, when the hour strikes twelve, relieve the watch.
Now, one by one, pledge your brave hands with mine.
You, [*selecting two in turn.*] guard the outward draw-bridge: you, the gates
Of the first tow'r: the iron draw-bridge, yours:
Your charge, the inner fort: you, guard the vaults
That wind thro' ways obscure to Ivan's cell:

You, bold Truwarotz, and brave Voronetz,
You, at his cell take station: thine, my brother,
The eastern turret: o'er its crested brow—
Be watchful—If all favour our design,
At stroke of one, a lighted beacon raise;
Wave it distinctly thrice:—at the third signal
We rush to Ivan's cave, and force our entrance
If aught our way oppose. A sail now waits
My summons, o'er Ladoga's lake, to waft us
To liberty, to wealth, to fame, to honour. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT THE THIRD.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Cloisters.

EMPRESS *and* NARITZIN.

Emp. My lord Naritzin, on thy faith I rest:
I shall pour forth, as truth and nature urge,
My secret soul before thee. Oh! I would
That I had never wielded in this hand
The sceptre reft from Ivan! Since that hour,
However outwardly I bear my pomp,
And arm my brow with confidence, within
Fear and suspicion that nor day nor night
Have rest, possess me. I, by violence
The empire seiz'd: declare what voice has pow'r
To say in accents that may win assent,
"Go, be at peace, repose thou in thy strength,
"Nor dread the avenger."

Narit. Whom have you to fear?

Emp. My successor. I gave the dire example.
Yet more, I dread thy charge, the prisoner Ivan.
But yesterday I did despise the boy,
I rank'd him with the very herd that crop
The grassy clod—Thy voice—the senate heard it—
Profusely blazon'd forth his praise—The realm
Once hail'd him king, and I before him bow'd,
First of his titled slaves.

Narit. You are his sovereign,

And on your word his weal or woe depends.
Give him to breathe the air that breathes on all,
And gaze upon the blessed light of heav'n.
Mistake me not, it is not my request
That you should rashly free him to the gaze
And shout of the capricious people. No:
Let him have commerce with religious men,
Where he may safely harbour: bind his soul
By rigid vows all dedicate to heav'n:
And to the general voice that shouts thy name,
Ivan will add his blessing.

Emp. No, I dare not:
Young as he is, and beautiful, and mild,
Compassion for his fate would gather strength
That must o'erturn my throne. I dare not free him;
Yet I would fain that Ivan breath'd in peace.
Thou can'st secure it—

Narit. How?

Emp. 'Tis in thy power
That he shall breathe the air that breathes on all,
And gaze upon the blessed light of heav'n;
And that his limbs bow not beneath their weight,
Wanting free space to move in. I dare trust
But thee alone. E'en in thy crime confest,
Thy treason, disobedience, I remark'd
A sense of duty that did shame the vaunt
Of smooth court flatterers—Is it thy desire
To lighten Ivan's misery?

Narit. By my own—

Emp. Naritzin, reassume the charge of Ivan:
Assuage his misery: where'er thou art,

Throughout the day, long as thou hold'st the rule
Of this dread fort, be at thy side the youth
E'en as a son most lov'd : yet, still at night-fall
Closely immure him in th'imprisoning cell.
This be his lot, so thou yon heav'n attest
That thy firm hand shall in his bosom plunge
This weapon, [*presenting a dagger.*] if or fraud or force again
Attempt his rescue.

Narit. I refuse the charge.

Emp. This sacred dagger at Pultowa sav'd
My sire, thy lord, from death : this now shall save
His daughter, by thy patriot zeal enthron'd.

Narit. Recall thy pardon, reassume thy honours,
Forget the vow that never blood should stain
Thy sceptre, be Naritzin's bold disloyalty
By death aveng'd—I will not touch that dagger.

Emp. Reflect, a thousand arms, a thousand daggers
Will vindicate thy sovereign : force me not
On deeds of blood : fain would my soul avoid them.
Thy sovereign sues, commands thee. Take it, [*the dagger.*] Ivan
Lives but to bless Naritzin : thy refusal
Is Ivan's instant death.

Narit. Not on my head
Be innocent blood !

Emp. [*to a guard without.*] Bid Lord Rimuni hither.

Narit. A moment's pause. I know his ruthless nature.

Emp. Bid Lord Rimuni hither! Speed —
Narit. Yet, stay—
Rimuni or Naritzin now shall perish.
Pledge but your word, and I accept the charge.
Emp. What thy intent?
Narit. Your fame, a nation's weal—
Swear, ere another sun shall light the world,
For ever from th' indignant realm to banish
Rimuni. Are you silent? Plunge the dagger,
Murd'ress, in Ivan's heart: so to your grave
Go down with charge of blood upon your brow:
So, in your sin, at heav'n's dread call, arise
Before the King of kings.
Emp. Ere yonder sun
Resumes his course, Rimuni flies the realm.
Take thou this weapon. [*he takes it.*]
Narit. Ivan shall not reign.
Emp. Receive thy sovereign's thanks — o'er populous Ingria
Thy government extends.
Narit. I seek no honours.
As yet thou art unstain'd [*drawing the dagger.*] with innocent blood.
Let me depart.
Emp. Yet hear me—Stay—Thy sovereign
Ere sun-set quits the isle: but, ere I leave
These scenes for ever,
My lord, I must hold conference with Ivan—
Nar. Not, I implore you, ere you have made known
Your purpose to Petrowna.

Emp. Why?

Narit. Her voice
Tempers at will his spirit: her fix'd glance
Holds magic influence o'er him.

Emp. Say, her sov'reign
Commands her to her presence.

Narit. I beseech you,
With tenderness, with pity, question Ivan.
And, I implore you, spare Petrowna's ear
The charge of murder: hide from her the vow
That past my lip. From Ivan's doom'd assassin,
Her eye would turn abhorrent.

Emp. Trust my caution—
Haste! bid her hither. [*Naritzin goes.*]—Ha! her voice, her glance
Hold magic influence o'er him! 'tis most palpable!
Tutor'd by her! and who but this Petrowna
Has Ivan's misery sooth'd? his weal, his woe,
Not mine, her spirit sways. My throne, my life,
Rests on this woman: 'tis most hazardous.
The boy now ripens into man, with manhood,
Ambition, vengeance, his acknowledg'd claim
To rule, will rouse ungovernable thoughts.
All must be plainly told; the husband's vow
Must yoke the wife; so shall Petrowna quench
Each latent spark that glows in Ivan's bosom,
And I in peace repose.

PETROWNA *enters.*

Pet. My lord Naritzin
Bade me attend your presence. Deign, accept

My thanks, how due! that once more on Naritzin
His sov'reign's favour rests.
Emp. On his obedience,
My favour rests.
Pet. Yet not th' entrusted charge,
Nor gifts, nor high rewards, nor added honours,
Have smooth'd his brow. Methought, unwonted gloom
Darken'd his cheek, as swift he hurried on
To hide in loneliness thoughts ill at ease.
Emp. I know the cause; and it doth much import thee
To feel its force. His sov'reign to his pray'r
Bow'd gracious, when thy lord, at once to lighten
The doom of Ivan, and to drive Rimuni
For ever from this realm—
Pet. [*interrupting her.*] Belov'd Naritzin!
Heav'n on thy head its choicest treasures show'r!
Emp. Vow'd—to prevent by death—the prisoner's flight,
If fraud or force should ere attempt his rescue.
You mark my words.
Pet. Too plainly—murder Ivan.
Emp. His vow is ratifi'd in heav'n.
Pet. Say—rather—
Where demons howl in torture.
Emp. Hear, Petrowna!
Thy sov'reign speaks.
Pet. Naritzin murder Ivan!
It shall not be.
Emp. Fain would I see the youth:

Hold converse with him: and myself observe
If rumour vilely has degraded him
To the low level of a senseless brute:
Or, as Naritzin vaunted it, if Ivan
Be grac'd with high endowments.
Pet. [*aside.*] Oh my soul!
'Tis as I fear'd. Her eye shall not glance on him.
If fear can curb, or pity melt the heart,
They shall not meet.
[*To the Empress.*] You once did look on Ivan:
And—you remember—the wide realm yet dwells
On that heart-rending scene. The very soldiers
Wept, they who crown'd you, when their rude hands cast
The infant, sweetly lock'd in cradled slumber,
Beneath thy throne: they wept who heard the shout
Of thousands, at whose uproar, Ivan woke,
Stretch'd out his little hands, and oft-time clapt
In sign of transport. Then thy cheek was seen
To bow o'er his, and on his smiling lip
Thy tears perforce gush'd down, while round thy neck,
(As thine had been the breast that nurtur'd him,)
His innocent arms were twin'd.
Emp. 'Tis ever present,
It troubles my night-vision. Why recal it?
Pet. Poor Ivan was not then a senseless brute.
Sore misery has marr'd the loveliest being
That ere kind heav'n gave birth to. Fell barbarians!
Fiends that they were to root out Nature's flow'r,
And plant their weeds envenom'd in its place!
Do not again look on him.

Emp. Why dissuade me?

Pet. By the remembrance of that moving scene,
By dread of horrors that may yet ensue,
If there be pow'r in words to change the will,
Thou shalt not look on Ivan.

Emp. Not look on him!

Pet. Where? on what spot of earth would'st thou confront him?

Emp. I understand thee not: explain thy meaning.

Pet. Where meet him? In the cell that drinks his groan?

Emp. No—rather in the sepulchre of death.

Pet. Here? In the light of day? Beneath heav'n's beam
Canst thou with still unswerving look, sustain
The light'ning of his eye when fix'd on thine?
Do not again behold him.

Emp. Here conduct him.

Pet. Oh never, never more thy tear will fall
As once upon his cheek.

Emp. Oh!

Pet. Thou hast reign'd
Triumphant; revelry, and joy, and feast,
Shouts of applause, and all that earth most envies,
Have made thy throne their dwelling. Think on Ivan.
Do your tears fall? turn not away: they fall,
Accepted offering to offended heav'n:
And every tear mingled with penitence,
Will wash and cleanse from off thy secret soul,
A spot of deep pollution. Nature form'd thee
Kind, gentle, generous.

Emp. Presumptuous woman!
What prompts thee, rashly daring, to address
Thy sov'reign thus?
Pet. At midnight, I have wept
O'er Ivan's flinty couch, and quak'd to hear,
When all was still, his shriek of agony:
'Tis this that makes me bold, and bids my voice
Thus warn you: hold not conference with Ivan.
Emp. Hear, and obey my word. A secret mystery
Perplexes all. I will enquire and judge.
Petr. [*Aside.*] 'Tis vain to move her. — Is then thy intent
That hapless Ivan should before thy senate
Appear, that those harsh men should probe his weakness:
Or thou alone confront him?
Emp. I, alone —
Pet. 'Tis perilous —
Emp. Unfold thy meaning—Say too,
(For thou no doubt hast aptly taught the boy,)
What are his rare endowments?
Pet. Heavn's best gift,
The heart's warm sympathies that render back
Kindness for kindness, love for love—Not vainly
In fruitless lore I wasted the brief hour
Allotted to console him: yet, I taught him,
('Twas all I taught, for I did rate his life
But at a moment's hazard) to o'ercome
Calamity by patience, to repose
In confidence on heav'n, and to resign

Not unprepar'd, unwarn'd of violent death,
His soul without a murmur unto God.
So have I rear'd him. Yet, at times—
Emp. Why silent?
Pet. Are there not wrongs and dreadful sufferings
Whose very mention, in each human bosom
Stirs righteous indignation? Hence, I dread
What may ensue, Ivan and thou, alone—
At sight of her who from his temples reft
The crown his fathers wore, whose stern command
Has robb'd his day of light, whose ruthless ministers
Have rack'd his tender limbs, will not the fiend
Rouse him to madd'ning horror? Thou hast heard it—
If then instructed thus in Ivan's nature,
Thy will is fix'd to commune lonely with him,
I must not be far distant.
Emp. I will see him. [*Petrowna goes.*
Lead Ivan hither. Speed—away—reply not.
How is it with me? What strange fear appalls?
Where'er I turn, some victim of oppression
Starts up, methinks, before me, and aloud
Cries vengeance.—Ere yon westering sun descends
I will depart: I would not here be found
When nature seeks repose.—Hark, hark, a footstep!
No, 'twas my fear. Why did I wish to see
The injur'd Ivan? What is my intent?
That I myself should witness what his nature?

How judge, when terror fills my inmost soul?
I hear them: 'tis a footstep: it draws near—
Oh spirit of my father! be thou present,
Sustain thy drooping child!

Pet. [*behind the scenes.*] Ivan —

Emp. I hear her:
It was Petrowna's voice: how mildly sweet!
So a fond mother welcomes in her child.

Pet. [*behind the scenes*] Lean on me—do not linger—Gaze no more
On yon bright orb.

IVAN *enters, looking back, leaning on Petrowna.*

Ivan. Was that the blessed sun
That lights the spacious world? Yon orb of fire?
Say, can you stilly gaze on it, Petrowna,
With unaverted eye? Mine it o'erpow'rs:
All, all is darkling round me. Oh support me!

Pet. Lean closer on me.

Ivan. Tho' it pains my sight,
Let me again behold it!

Pet. Turn not, Ivan!
The Empress is before you.

Emp. [*aside.*] Hapless youth!
How hast thou suffer'd!

Ivan. Oh that piercing air!
You said it would be pleasant to my sense:
But it comes shivering over me, keenly chill:
Yet is its breath most sweet. Aid me, Petrowna!

My limbs sink under me. I pray thee, hide me
In the dark dungeon. Let me not behold her.
Pet. Remember thou thy promise; kneel, implore
Her mercy.
Ivan. 'Tis thy will—Lead, lead me to her.
Still on my sight the dazzling sun-beams flash.
Where is the Empress?
Emp. [*aside, as Ivan slowly advances.*]
Fair indeed his form!
Most beautiful! of growth beyond his years!
Of port commanding!—Ivan!
Ivan. Whose that voice?
'Tis harsh unto mine ear. Speak, speak, Petrowna!
Pet. The Empress graciously extends her hand
In sign of kindness. I entreat you, Ivan,
Implore her pity—
Ivan. I will kneel before her—[*kneels.*
Not for myself I sue thee. Hear my prayer!
Emp. I am not of harsh mood. Witness these tears!
Pet. [*to the Empress.*] Must I retire?
Emp. Leave me not lone with Ivan—
Yet his no brutal nature—
Ivan. Scorn me not.
Emp. I cannot longer gaze upon his face.
Lead him away.
Ivan. No, not till thou hast heard me.
Emp. What would'st thou?
Ivan. And hast thou the heart to ask it?
Emp. Take, take him hence.
Ivan. No; to thy knees I cling.

None but thyself can give my bosom peace—
I do entreat thee, as thou lov'st the heav'ns
That on thy brow have show'rd felicity,
Vouchsafe reply! — Live they, my wretched parents?

Emp. They live—

Ivan. And is their life—

Pet. [*interrupting him.*] Oh, ask no more!

Ivan Like Ivan's? How! you answer not! Have mercy!

Have mercy! 'Tis for me alone they suffer!
For me they are deprived of air, of light,
Of liberty. My crown is on thy brow:
Wear it, and to thy successor, at will,
Bequeath it.—But, if thou have hope for mercy,
Release poor Ivan's parents, and leave me
To heaven and to Petrowna.

Pet. Oh! assuage
The anguish of his spirit!

Emp. Hast thou, Ivan,
No other pray'r? None for thyself? Speak freely:
Nay, dread me not—

Ivan. What should I dread? Behold me.

Emp. [*aside.*] Oh that the voice of truth had reach'd my throne!
That I had known his gentle nature! [*to him.*] Ivan,
It may import thee much, the truth declare,
Has aught unwarranted by Lord Naritzin
Ere in thy cell found entrance?

Ivan. Dark and deep
My dwelling, far from human sight and sound:

And the sepulchral roof that closes o'er me
The bound that parts the living from the dead.
Emp. [*aside.*] It wounds my soul.
Ivan. The elements alone
In their illimitable sweep had pow'r
To interrupt my solitude: and oft
From unendurable loneliness arous'd,
I have giv'n answer to the voice of winds
That heav'd the roaring waves; and I have leapt
In transport from my flinty couch, to welcome
The thunder as it burst upon my roof,
And beckon'd, to the light'ning as it flash'd
And sparkled on these fetters: while in vain
I proffer'd, where the volley fiercely blaz'd,
My forehead to its death-stroke.
Emp. 'Tis too horrible!
Pet. No; not the roar of winds, the thunder's crash,
The inward whisper of a guilty spirit
Alone is insupportable —
Ivan. Yet, hear me!
Not for myself I sue thee, 'tis for them
My bosom bleeds, for them, my wretched parents,
Imprison'd for my crime: the crime, that Ivan
Was born to rule: waste not in vain lament,
Waste not on me unfruitful tears—I know
My hapless doom, and am prepar'd to suffer.
But, pity those who mourn the living Ivan,
And call the day accurst, which gave to light
Me, their first-born. Pause you? your silence kills—
Scorn not these tears!—

Pet. I dread what may ensue.
You heeded not his pray'r. Rage knits his brow.
Ivan. Thou call'd a God on earth, hast thou no mercy?
Pet. His agitated bosom labours high
With violence unwonted. [*To the Empress.*] I exhort you,
Avoid his sight.
Emp. The voice of majesty
Shall curb his rage. Ivan!
Pet. Not thus address him:
Not with loud voice of stern command! Hear, Ivan!
Withdraw. [*To the Empress.*] His cheek is fire, his eye darts flame.
Ivan. [*to the Empress.*] Withdraw!
Emp. [*on Ivan's approach.*] He heeds thee not, Petrowna,
Stand thou between us: 'tis thy sov'reign calls
On thee for aid.
Pet. Stay, Ivan!
Ivan. [*fronting the Empress.*] Thou, the usurper!
Is this the crowned brow? Let me behold it.
I will confront its terrors. Who art thou,
Mortal! that mock'st omnipotence? Who, thou,
That in the hollow of thy right hand grasp'st
Yon orb of light, and with thy left hast yok'd
The freedom of the winds; and criest aloud,
"Sun! shine not thou on that devoted head!
"Nor let thy pure breath, unimprison'd air!
"Make cool those fever'd temples!" Let me trace

The signature and majesty of heav'n
Stampt on thy front.

Emp. [*sinking on her seat.*] Help—I am faint—
Support me.

Pet. Ivan—He hears me not—I ne'er have witness'd
Such violence of rage—He knows me not—
'Tis past control—

Ivan. [*his passion gradually rises to frenzy.*]
Turn not away—Behold me.
What trace I on that brow? Woe, terror, shame.
Where now thy pow'r, thy sov'reignty o'er Ivan?
Usurper! from thy temples lift the crown,
And fix it on my brow, and at my feet
Seek pardon. Give the sceptre to my wielding.
Mark its just use—Haste! ope the prison gates.
Lo! how they issue forth, faint, pale, afraid
To look upon the light! Lo! how they creep
Bow'd down on the strange earth, like beings unus'd
To gaze on heav'n with man's erected front!
[*to the Empress.*] Art thou my mother? Oh! I
knew thee not.
Let me kiss off those tears that bathe thy cheek:
They long have sever'd us. Come! to my arms!
Oh shield me from that torturer! [*Petrowna.*] Shield
thy chield!

Pet. Ivan! it is Petrowna.

Ivan. [*struggling with her.*] Off, barbarian!
They ne'er shall part us more. [*Embracing the
Empress.*] Come: you shall hear

Strange tales of Ivan. To my prison stole
A monk, a wily man: long years of suffering
Have since toil'd by: and the swol'n wave — I saw it —
Foam'd o'er him. Mark how he allur'd my boyhood —
He told me I should wander in green fields,
And wreathe fresh flow'rs and garlands, where gay birds
Sing in their bow'rs, and gurgling streamlets wind
Thro' sun-shine glades their many-dimpled rills,
But — 'twas to plunge me deeper, deeper-down,
In midnight darkness. [*To Petrowna.*] Hence, thou fiend! away!
Why, why pursue me to this sunless cave?
Is this too thy doom'd haunt?
Emp. [*to Petrowna.*] Loose not thy hold —
Ivan. [*to the Empress.*] Weep not, dear mother? By thy tears I know thee;
Haply thou know'st not Ivan: not this flesh
So strangely mangled. 'Twas not thus, when first
Thy tear of joy gush'd on the new-born babe.
But — never shall the torturers vex us more.
Hush! hush! No ear must hear it — 'Twas Petrowna,
Not that false monk, that spake of freedom, empire —
Hush! hush!
Emp. Ha!
Pet. Heed not! these are words of frenzy —
Emp. [*to Petrowna.*] Forget not the dread oath.
Ivan. [*to the Empress.*] Nay — be at rest.
Cloud not thy brow. The usurper shall implore

Forgiveness, and kneel prostrate at our foot-stool.
Off, off, fell fiend! [*to Petrowna.*]
Emp. Let him not 'scape thy arms.
Ivan. I can no more resist. Strike not again.
Pet. My son! He falls exhausted: [*Ivan falls.*] prone on earth.
Ivan. Once: twice: they murder me in prison. Help!
Strike at th' anointed brow. Beware, fell fiend!
The eye of heav'n is on you.
Pet. Ivan, Ivan!
Hear, my beloved son! it is Petrowna,
It is thy mother clasps thee in her arms.
My voice has reach'd him.
Ivan. [*recovering.*] Is it thou, Petrowna?
A fearful vision had disturb'd my sense.
Emp. Hide him from me for ever. From this isle
I haste—farewell. Think on Naritzin's oath.
[*The Empress goes.*
Ivan. My limbs sink under me—support me.
Pet. Ivan!
Lean on me. In these arms once more find peace.

END OF ACT THE FOURTH.

ACT V. SCENE I.

An unfrequented spot nigh the Castle. Dark night.

RIMUNI, ALTORF.

Alt. My lord! here linger not: your doom is fix'd.
Now, as the secret senate clos'd, I met
Count Olbert. Speed, I pray, your instant flight,
And underneath the night's propitious gloom
Haste from the isle. The royal word has doom'd you
To hopeless exile.
Rim. Not behold me!
Alt. Never—
The Empress is inexorable.
Rim. Ha!
Alt. An oath, a sacred vow has bound her soul
To drive you from her presence. Here delay not—
Ere the strong hand of pow'r arrest your flight,
Speed, quit the isle. Siberia's wilds await you
If but another sun behold you here.
Naritzin is restored to all his honours,
And with the charge of Ivan, added proofs
Of royal favour court him.
Rim. Court Naritzin!
Then farewell hope! I charge thee, faithful friend,

Let it be widely rumor'd that Rimuni
Fled suddenly the isle. Farewell! [*Altorf goes.*]
Naritzin!
Thou first in favour!—Bind by oath her soul
To banish me for ever! Wayward woman!
I will not crouch beneath the foot that spurns me.
What then remains? Insatiate thoughts that prompt
Stern deeds, and the unyielding spirit of vengeance
That lays the oppressor low. 'Tis known to all
That Mirovitz o'er Ivan holds the night-watch:
Add too—so will'd the usurper—the whole isle
Reels, surfeited with wine and revel feasting—
By heav'n! it must succeed, if Mirovitz—
And well I know his nature—aid my purpose.
At the north rampart I will cross his round—
Ivan shall reign, and this ingrate usurper
Kneel slave-like at his footstool. [*Exit.*

Scene, the North Ramparts.

MIROVITZ *and* FEODOR *enter.*

Feo. The midnight hour is past. Say, Mirovitz,
Are all prepar'd?
Mir. At one, we rescue Ivan.
Success must crown the attempt. All now concurs,
The guard, the day's late revels, this dark night.
Look! how the dull moon labours in her course:
Those vapours, streak'd with ruddy gleams, portend
The gathering of the winds: and yon bleak clouds
That thicken in the south, will quickly waft us

To the lone isle; and say, what eye can note us?
E'en those whose restless lids, unseal'd by slumber
Ope at this hour, are all o'er-charg'd with fumes
Of wine and riotous feast.

Fco. But how deceive
Naritzin's search? His unremitting zeal
Visits throughout the fort, from cell to cell,
The nightly watch.

Mir. His unremitting zeal!
How fruitless! All, e'en to suspicion's eye,
Shall seem secure. The hour, the occasion urge:
These now neglected, say, what hope hereafter?
All now is fix'd, and years on years may pass
Ere men so leagu'd here meet. It must succeed—
At the high altar I have bound their souls
To free their king.

RIMUNI *enters.*

Ha! at this hour, what spy
Here basely lurks? Thy name, thy purpose, speak!

Rim. Rimuni—Vengeance—

Mir. 'Tis confirm'd, I know it—
That thou art, like myself, a man disgrac'd:
The sunshine, whose meridian blaze illum'd thee,
Is suddenly obscur'd—

Rim. For ever set.
Yet not the less, e'en in the senate lurk
Men to my will devote; brave men who scorn
The weak usurper; lords of might and pow'r
To 'stablish on the empire of his sires
The sovereign of thy choice.

Mir. My choice! Who?
Rim. Ivan.
Elizabeth is hateful to thy soul:
Take my pledg'd hand. Perish Elizabeth!
This night you hold o'er Ivan watch: this night
The isle is all dissolv'd in revel feasting.
Who, save Naritzin, can control our course?
Command this weapon. I have basely wrong'd thee;
Yet—if the galling yoke of dire oppression,
The bond of common suffering can unite
Brave men who brook not wrong, lo one whose hand
Fears not to execute the boldest deed
Thy spirit dares conceive.
Miro. The proof awaits thee.
Thou at my side attend: be bold, be faithful:
If faithless—lo thy doom. [*drawing a dagger.*] Go, Feodor,
Speed to the eastern turret: at the stroke
Of one—be vigilant—the beacon raise:
Wave it distinctly thrice. At the third signal
We rush to Ivan's cell, and force our entrance,
If aught our way oppose.
Feo. I shall not fail—
Farewell. [*Feodor goes.*
Miro. Speed, hour of vengeance! if we fail,
Better to perish boldly, than contemn'd,
Live unaveng'd. Success or death awaits us.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene, Petrowna's Apartment.

PETROWNA.

Pet. 'Tis horrible! premeditated murder!
Fell fiend, to lodge thy poison in my heart,
To force on me the secret, that Naritzin
Has bound his soul, by solemn oath confirm'd it,
To slay the innocent Ivan! How prevent it?
Thy wrongs, oh Ivan! fill the realm with horror,
And each new day, each hour in rapid flight,
Engenders new revolts. Oh heav'n! I view
Him whom I lov'd, rever'd, ador'd, a murderer,
Spotted with innocent blood. Relentless demon,
To link Naritzin to thy fell design!
Our bond of love was interchange of souls,
Each in the other center'd: how, how live
In uncommunicating wretchedness!
Hark! 'tis the tow'r's loud chime, [*the chime heard.*]
'twixt twelve and one.
'Tis past his wonted hour. Why stays Naritzin?
Some unforeseen event—perchance—some tumult!
Merciful heav'n! Ho! [*Calling the Guard.*
Guard. Did I hear thy call?
Pet. Say, is thy lord return'd?
Guard. No foot this night
Has past the gate.
Pet. Let Albert now go forth,
And bid him speed, I charge you, and observe
If all is peace and quiet. Bid him speed,

And bring swift tidings of thy lord's approach.
[*Guard goes.*
Naritzin shuns my presence, and avoids,
Bleak tho' the storm, and late th' ungenial hour,
This sheltering roof. His painful charge, as wont,
Urg'd him to visit in their cells, ere midnight,
Th' entrusted prisoners. Has he look'd on Ivan?
And told the victim that Petrowna's husband
Is doom'd to shed his blood.

GALVEZ *enters.*

Galvez! most welcome,
Where is thy lord?

Gal. But now we cross'd the draw-bridge:
I saw him slowly passing towards the castle.

Pet. How! underneath this roof, and still avoid me?
Say, was all peace and quiet on your round?
No sight, no sound unwonted?

Gal. All, methought,
Seem'd tranquil—but— [*A footstep heard.*

Pet. I hear his footstep. Hence. [*Galvez goes.*
How solemn his approach!

NARITZIN *enters, and lays down his sword and dagger.*

Narit. Thou here! oh heav'n!

Pet. Late is the hour of thy return, and bleak
The gales of night sweep round the battlements
That crest the fort. You are o'er-tir'd, I fear:

The chill breeze, and the night storm's ceaseless
fury,
Have sorely harass'd thee.
Narit. I reck'd them not:
'Tis not the outward storm—'tis here—'tis here.
Pet. Come to thy rest.
Nar. Thou too, at this late hour?
Why art thou absent from thy peaceful chamber?
I did not look to find thee waking, love,
Or I ere now had urg'd my homeward step.
I pray thee to thy chamber.
Pet. But—thou seem'st
By misery opprest. I dread to ask thee—
Yet—I beseech thee. In thy nightly round—
Nar. Wherefore this silence?
Pet. Say, was all secure?
Narit. All seem'd secure.
Pet. But—was there aught? Oh tell me?
Narit. As I drew near the fort that guards the
prisoners,
Methought I heard the whisper of a voice,
In utterance like Rimuni's. But—in vain
I search'd each spot—'twas idle fancy—
Pet. Whispers!
And—utterance like Rimuni's! heav'n forefend!
Yet—for it closely presses on my soul,
Tell me, Naritzin, when your search explor'd
The prisoners dungeons, did you look on Ivan?
Fain would I know, after this day of trouble,
If calm his sleep.
Narit. I left his cell unsearch'd.

I could not interrupt poor Ivan's slumber.
The innocent may sleep.
Pet. Since last we parted,
Hast thou of aught held conference with him?
Narit. No.
Pet. [*in transport.*] Then Ivan knows it not.
Narit. Not know it? what?
What words have 'scap'd thy lips? unfold their meaning?
Pet. How! said I aught? oh heed it not! the tongue
At times will murmur words devoid of sense.
Narit. Give me, I pray, strict answer. Did the Empress—
Pet. [*confused.*] The Empress!
Narit. Why thus troubled? did the Empress
Disclose—
Pet. Oh peace! spare, spare me yet awhile.
My spirit is within me bow'd and broken—
My husband! we will talk of this hereafter.
Oh! let us taste the blessing of repose,
And to kind angels reconcile our thoughts,
Ere deeper woe assail us. Do not linger:
Sleep will not on my eye-lid shed its balm,
While thou art absent. [*Petrowna goes.*
Narit. Never on my lid
Shall slumber shed the blessing of repose.
'Tis as I fear'd, the Empress has betray'd
The fatal secret. Underneath the veil
Of tempting words, e'en in Petrowna's smile,
I noted the sharp pang that rack'd her soul.

I am her bane and horror. Thro' the day
Her eye will wither mine with frozen look,
And in her dreams, her night-shriek will denounce
Vengeance on Ivan's murderer. Of his crown
I reft the innocent child: I now am doom'd
With this infernal gift, to pierce his heart—
So, guilt engenders guilt, till, ripe for vengeance
On the offender's brow, eternal justice
Heaps retribution. Judge of heav'n and earth,
Now ere this blade drops blood, in mercy strike me!

GALVEZ *hastily enters.*

Whence this intrusion? say—
Gal. My lord, a soldier
Seeks instant entrance.
Narit. Hither quickly lead him.

GALVEZ *and* ORTOSK *enter.*

Say, at this hour why seek me here?
Ort. My lord!
As on my watch I duly went my round,
About the noon of day, I chanc'd to spy
A boat beneath the fort, and on the shore
An old man, and two youths, in guise, it seem'd,
Of fishermen, who on the Neva earn
Their bread by daily toil: as I approach'd
(Awhile unseen) I heard their busy tongues:
Words indistinct, save that I plainly noted
Their conference was of Ivan.
Narit. Oh beware!

Mislead me not! Of Ivan! Ivan's woe,
Ivan's sad tale is rife on every tongue.
Ort. But there was further meaning in their words
Than idle pity, or I mainly err.
I warn'd them from that spot, and on I past
So thought they, to my round: but close I watch'd them.
Their skiff is moor'd, in secret, underneath
The birch, whose hoar boughs overhang the flood:
And, my day-duty done, I there observ'd them
Watching the flight of the clouds, as men prepar'd
Ere long to hoist the sail.
Narit. Speed, trusty Galvez!
My sword — that dagger! Take thy weapons with thee.
Soldier! attend us.
Petrowna! 'tis for thee my bosom bleeds.
Oh be deep slumber on her! Speed we forth
To Ivan's cell. [*They go.*
Pet. [*behind the scenes.*] Wherefore this long delay?

PETROWNA *enters.*

It tortures me. My lord Naritzin? Gone.
What ho! Who guards the portal?

Soldier *enters.*

Where is thy lord?
Sol But now he past the gate.

Pet. Alone?

Sol. No, Galvez with him. Swift they sped:
With them a soldier of the fort—

Pet. Lead on:
To Ivan's cell. In thy good guard I trust. [*They go.*

Scene changes to the outside of Ivan's cell.

A gloomy vault feebly lighted.

NARITZIN, GALVEZ, ORTOSK, *enter.*

Narit. Soldier! on yon commanding bastion take
Thy stand: that eminence o'erlooks the fortress:
Note carefelly if aught unwonted strike
Thy wary eye: and give me timely warning.
[*Stations him on the outside of the scene.*
I charge you, on your life, keep strictest watch.
Galvez, there take thy stand: [*Stations Galvez on the opposite side.*] and, at my summons
Speed quickly hither.—Not a sound—no motion—
Oh that the roar of winds, the crash of thunder
Peal'd thro' these noiseless vaults! so might they silence
These audible throbs, this tempest in my heart!
There, Ivan! there thou slumber'st, [*approaching the cell.*] in yon dungeon.
Now, when I visited the prisoners' cells,
Each, one by one, tho' there my main charge lay,
I could not break on Ivan's hour of rest.
Thrice I drew near the cell, with full intent
To warn him of my vow: My heart recoil'd

Yet all must be reveal'd, or worse ensues.
[*He listens at the door of the cell.*
Soft; 'tis his hour of slumber. Why that sound?
What do I hear? His deep groan strikes my ear:
And now a quick and agitated step
Rings on the echoing flints. Belov'd Petrowna!
All hope of bliss with thee is fled for ever.
Ivan must know his doom—Ivan—
[*calling loudly to him.*

Ivan. Who summons?

Narit. [*unlocks the cell.*] Ah, hapless youth! the horrors of the day
Yet haunt thy soul, and from thy eyelids drive
Sleep's soothing balm. [*Aside.*] What then my charge accurst?
Why art thou silent? Speak—

Ivan. Thy groans appal me.
Oh gaze not on me, so.

Narit. Look on me, Ivan:
Thou art not wont to turn thine eye from mine.

Ivan. Thy glance, methinks, streams fire. Why, at this hour,
Say, what thy purpose? Yet I dread to hear.
Why dost thou start? Why turn thine eye around
As fearful of surprise?

Narit. My heart is fraught
Beyond its bearing. I have kindly us'd thee:
Till now, beneath my rule, no word unkind
Has ever reach'd thee, Ivan.

Ivan. Thou hast been
A friend, a father to me.

Narit. How, how utter

Words that hang curses on the tongue that speaks them ?
Yet, all must be reveal'd, all clearly told.
Prepare to hear the vow that dooms this hand
To murder —
Ivan. Whom ?
Narit. Thee, Ivan.
Ivan. Thou, my father !
Thy hand to murder Ivan !
Narit. I have vow'd
A terrible oath —
Ivan. I am prepar'd to die.
Narit. But I am not prepared to murder thee.
Ivan. Oh let me fling my arms around thy neck,
There breathe the love I owe thee—
Narit. But, forgive me,
Deep is my guilt. Oh had it pleas'd high heav'n
Or ere thy birth, in mercy to have swept me
From off the living land, thou, at this hour,
King on thy throne had'st sway'd in righteousness
The sceptre of thy sires, and I had lain
In peace within the grave.
Ivan. Come to my arms :
Once more embrace me.
Narit. [*starting from his embrace.*] What that sound ?
Ivan. I heard none —
Narit. [*half distracted with horror.*] A foot-step : ha ! away ! no earthly pow'r,
Shall force him hence.—Have I not sworn his death ?
Hear, fiend of hell !

Ivan. Thick-gathering drops of sweat
Fall from his brow —

Narit. I heard it—hark, again
A foot-step. It speeds on. Hence, traitors, hence.
'Tis hush'd, and all is peace.

Ivan. 'Twas but the sound
Of the lone sentinel, or gusty night-breeze
Sweeping along the vaults.

Narit. I must disclose it,
While yet my voice has pow'r—Ivan, 'tis sworn :
The solemn vow is ratified in heaven :
No, to a fiend my plighted soul is bound
That I will fix this dagger in thy heart
Ere mortal man shall triumph in thy rescue.
Yet, had I not so sworn, Rimuni's hand
Ere now had stabb'd thee. [*the tower-clock strikes one.*] What that sound ?

Ivan. The tow'r
Strikes one. [*Galvez rushes in.*

Gal. My lord, as tow'rds the east I gaz'd,
I saw a beacon on the topmost tow'r
Distinctly wave : then, suddenly it vanish'd,
And all was dark.

Narit. Speed, speed, resume thy station :
Observe again what passes.

[*As Galvez goes, a violent knocking is heard at the outside of Ivan's cell.*

Who thus knocks ?

Pet. [*without.*] It is Petrowna ; haste, unclose the cell—
Ivan, unclose the cell.

Ivan. Conceal that dagger.
If thou must slay me,
At her departure, fear not Ivan's struggle:
My death-groan shall not reach Petrowna's ear.
Pet. [*without.*] Oh do not murder him! unclose the cell.
They come. On every side swift-gleaming lights
Flash to and fro—
Narit. [*opens the cell and catches her in his arms.*] Petrowna—
Pet. Horror! horror!
Naritzin—Ivan—whither shall I turn?
I know thy horrid vow: the demon told it.
Come to me, Ivan. [*Galvez rushes in.*
Gal. Treason—I beheld
The beacon torch thrice wave. [*Ortosk rushes in.*
Ort. Come forth: arm'd men
Rush tow'rds the prisoner's cells.
Narit. Ring out th'alarum;
Summon the guard. Petrowna to thy chamber.
Horror and death surround the cell. Away—
Ivan. If Ivan e'er was dear to thee, depart.
Pet. I stir not hence. A mother's love defends him,
My breast, his shield.
[*The alarum rings, the tumult of the Conspirators is heard.*
Mir. Force down the iron draw-bridge!
Break, break the bars.
Rim. [*without.*] Rescue to Ivan!—
Cons. [*without.*] Rescue!

Narit. Not if this sword has pow'r—Galvez,
come forth!
Soldier! desert me not. On, boldly on. [*they hurry out.*
Pet. Naritzin! hear. Their multitude o'erpow'rs
him, [*clash of arms.*
They close him round on every side. Help, heav'n!
[*The Conspirators, with torches in their hands, led on by Rimuni, Mirovitz, and Feodor, drive back Naritzin and his friends.*
Rim. [*encountering Naritzin.*] Naritzin, 'tis
Rimuni now defies thee.
Narit. [*defeats, and runs Rimuni through the body.*] So perish in thy guilt—
Rim. Curse on thy arm. [*dies.*
Miro. Ivan! come forth! 'Tis Mirovitz who
calls you
To freedom, vengeance, empire.
Narit. [*draws his dagger, and stands over Ivan, in act to strike him.*] Never, never
[*To Ivan.*] Thou must not live. Back, traitors! or
this dagger
Now strikes him dead.
Pet. Oh do not shed his blood.
Ivan. [*to Narit.*] Dread not in me resistance.
Miro. [*to Feodor.*] Wrest the dagger
To the Conspirators.] Think of your oaths. Rescue
your sovereign—
Narit. [*going to stab Ivan.*] Never:
While I have being.
Miro. [*wrests the dagger from Naritzin, and is in act to slay him.*] Die then.

Pet. [*seizing the arm of Mirovitz, kneels to Ivan.*]
Save him, Ivan —
Defend Petrowna's husband !
Ivan. [*to Petrowna.*] Be at peace—
The wretched Ivan can no more sustain
The anguish of thy soul—Thus, thus, [*snatches the dagger from Mirovitz, and stabs himself.*]
I end it—
Naritzin ! none, save Ivan, could absolve thee
From that fell oath : no other arm could rescue
Those whom my soul most loves from ruthless vengeance.
Petrowna now will bless me : and, Naritzin,
Thou on thy death-bed may'st remember Ivan.
Support me, oh I faint.
Miro. [*presenting his sword to Narit.*] My hopes are blasted,
I seek not mercy : take my sword, Naritzin ;
Death, instant death.
Pet. Ivan, my son ! look on me—
It is Petrowna's lip that breathes on thine.
Ivan. My sight grows dim, my hand hath lost its hold :
Support me : closer in thy arms enfold me !
[*Petrowna clasps him in her arms.*
Pet. Here, lay thy head.
Ivan. 'Tis sweet to breathe my last
On the sole spot where peace once dwelt with Ivan.
[*He dies, Petrowna faints on him.*

THE END.

ZAMORIN AND ZAMA,

A TRAGEDY

IN

FIVE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Men. Peruvians.

Villoma, *an Inca. Priest of the Sun.*

Zamorin, { *an Inca. Leader of the Peruvian army.* / *Hostage with the Spaniards.*

Gulaxa, { *an Inca, pretending to the Crown of Cuzco, supported by Pizarro.*

Orcas, *Peruvian Chief.*

Arcal, Rimac, } *Conspirators.*

Spaniards.

D. F. Pizarro,

Juan Pizarro, *his Brother.*

Pedro de Lerma, *a discontented Chief.*

Alvarados, *an old brave Captain.*

Benalcazar, *ditto.*

Don Diego de Almagro, { *Son to Pizarro's rival. A young honourable Knt.*

Woman.

Zama, { *a Coya, Daughter of the Sun, Child of Villoma, Wife of Zamorin.*

SCENE, Fortress of Cuzco, founded on a Rock, crowned by the Temple of the Sun. At its base, Pizarro's Camp, and part of Cuzco in ruins.

Time, That of representation.

ZAMORIN AND ZAMA.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Court before the Temple of the Sun.

An Altar before the gates of the Temple.

VILLOMA.

Vil. God of my fathers! hear me.
Thou, thron'd on flame! Thou, at whose dawn, the world
Thy visible creation, bursts the veil
Of darkness, and in new-born life and lustre
Sees all that breathe, look up, and bless thy beams:
Hear my deep anguish! Now no more, my voice
Calls down, as once in happier years, thy ray,
Pure source of being, thro' the womb of earth
To stream fertility. No more, thy priest
Fresh gathering from the spring free tribute, lays
The prime of the year, of herb, and fruit, and flow'r
Nature's sweet offering on thy bloodless shrine.
Far other gifts I bring: receive these spoils,
That mournful on thy golden gates I hang,

The lance, the helm, and buckler: while I call
On thee, once God of Peace, to arm thy sons
With dauntless fortitude. Let brave Zamorin
Again exultant from Pizarro's host
Return: and on thy heav'n-born child, sole heir
Of slain Huascar, here, in triumph fix
The crown that grac'd his sires on Cuzco's throne!

ZAMA *enters, kneels.*

Zama. My sire!
Vil. My Zama—
Oh may the blessing of a father's voice
Assuage thy grief!
Zama. Yet—lives my husband? say—
Deceive me not: I think I could endure
From thee to hear his doom: let none less lov'd
Say to thy child, "Zamorin rests in death."
Vil. How shall I answer thee?
Zama. Oh speak.
Vil. His doom
Is yet unknown. Day after day, in vain
I claim the hostage.
Zama. Ah! the foot that treads
Where the base Spaniard haunts, to Cuzco's walls
Shall never more return. Our word was sacred:
On the dread day mark'd out for Cuzco's woe,
This fort impregnable, yon gold-roof'd temple,
Gifts, and exhaustless wealth, and countless gems,
Offerings from kings thro' ages to their god,
Had grac'd Pizarro's triumph, if Peru,

Regardless of the city of her god,
Fear'd to confront the Spaniard. Such the terms,
And famine forc'd compliance, when Pizarro
Proclaim'd by solemn oath, that fresh supplies
Should Cuzco's wants relieve, if brave Zamorin
Went forth the public hostage, pledg'd for Cuzco:
Yea, o'er his banner'd cross the Spaniard vow'd,
That, if Peru, ere that dread day, once more
Should arm her routed multitudes, Zamorin
Again should lead the battle. Thus allur'd
From Cuzco's walls the voluntary hostage
Went fearless forth.

Vil. Yet vibrates on my heart
His farewell word.

Zama. But, from that day, no succour
Has Cuzco's wants reliev'd, no voice has breath'd
Word of Zamorin. What avails it now,
That to defend the city of her god,
And free her far-fam'd chieftain, arm'd Peru
Her banner'd rainbow rears, and hosts on hosts
Fill all the plain? in vain. The perjur'd Spaniard
Basely detains the hostage: and Zamorin,
Whose brave resistance rous'd Peru, whose spirit
Glow'd thro' the mingled mass, whose arm alone
Could guide in war her multitudes, Zamorin,
Th' avenger of his country, 'mid yon host
Pines in base chains, or now, an untomb'd corse,
Feasts their vile dogs of carnage.

Vil. Calm thy soul.

Zama. Hear me, my sire, nor fondly feign a hope
No longer felt.

Now grant my only pray'r: let me go forth,
And learn Zamorin's fate.

Vil. And wouldst thou leave
A father's arms, and Cuzco's hallow'd walls,
To rush amidst the riot, and flush'd camp
Of yon fell spoilers?

Zama. To Zamorin's arms
I haste, to sooth his soul, or with him perish.

Vil. Urge not a vain request.

Zama. Must then Zamorin,
Who went the public hostage, who reliev'd
The public woe, when famine and despair
Knelt to the foe for bread, mid ruthless men
Perish, of all abandon'd, far from Zama,
On whose responsive look his eye might dwell,
And while it swims in death's o'ershadowing mist,
Catch, ere it close for ever, the last solace
Of one fond tear? my father! by that name!
Oh by the memory of her who bore me,
Whose image, ne'er forgotten, lives in Zama,
Whose voice, ne'er heard in vain, speaks in thy heart
While her lov'd daughter pleads—

ORCAS *suddenly enters.*

Vil. Why, Orcas, here?
Whence this intrusion?

Orcas. Zeal to save thy life,
And Cuzco's tow'rs, and the sun's hallow'd temple
From spoil and profanation. Not alone
By the fell Spaniard, by her native sons,
Cuzco is doom'd to perish—

Vil. How?
Orc. By treason.
Vil. Treason!
Zama. Oh horror!
Orc. Since the perjur'd Spaniard,
Regardless of his vow, once more cut off
The scant supply, despair and swift revolt
Have spread from breast to breast. This day, ere dawn,
When wearied from my night-watch I return'd,
Thro' the thick mists that swept the mount, I saw
A fire-ball from the Spanish camp beneath
Flash forth, a second from the southern mound
Crost it in air: that was th' appointed signal.
A youth by horror struck and deep remorse,
Confest the crime. And, here, in that dark cavern
Where the sun ne'er sent down a beam, vile traitors
Leagu'd with Gulaxa—
Vil. [*interrupting him.*] Ha! that base usurper!
Whom fell Pizarro treacherously has lur'd
With Cuzco's promis'd crown?
Orc. The same.—All know
His rank, how glorious once, an honour'd Inca,
Sprung of the sun's pure race, of royal blood:
But—from that day when captur'd by Pizarro,
The conqueror spar'd his life, the base Peruvian
Thro' fear, or fraud (what recks the worthless motive)
Worships the fell invader: so fame rumours:
And, in these walls, amid faint-hearted men
Dispirited by woe, his vaunted pow'r
And favour with Pizarro, each new day

Gain him new followers. With that man, the traitors
Who, in their turn, this day the fortress guard,
Hold secret conference.

Vil. What their fell intent?

Orc. To fix the hour, when to these hallow'd walls
Pizarro shall advance, and on this temple
Upraise his blood-stain'd banner.

Vil. First, his steel
Shall pierce my bosom.

Zama. First, the hallow'd stream
That warms this heart, a Coya's blood shall flow,
And on his brow the daughter of the sun
Draw down vindictive fire.

Vil. Speed, Orcas, haste:
Summon the chosen chiefs that guard the temple:
And let the signal wave, and,—so deceiv'd—
The traitors join Gulaxa. I will meet him.
Tho' long adversity has bow'd the sons
Of Cuzco, tho' consuming famine slack'd
Their pithless joints, yet in these walls are men
Who in their heav'n-born monarch's righteous cause
Will gladly perish. Haste—

Orc. Be such my death. [*Exit.*

[*Loud shouts and cries heard.*

Zama. Whence that loud shout, those cries?

Vil. 'Tis now the time:
The guard at my command here lead the Spaniard.
Ne'er, till this day, have Cuzco's sons beheld
A Spanish chief in chains.

ARCAL *rushes in. Shouts continued.*

Arc. Priest of the sun!
Speed forth, allay the tumult, aid the guard
O'erpow'r'd by numbers—

One of the Guard *rushing in.*

Guard. Holy father! haste,
Or Cuzco streams with blood.
Vil. Zama, retire.
Zama. Retire! thy life in danger? come, my father. [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the Public Square.

Peruvians *contending with the* Guard *conducting* ALMAGRO *in chains.*

Guard. Drive, drive them back.
1 *Per.* Think of Peru's slain race.
2 *Per.* [*to Almagro.*] Give me my son.
[*Almagro in silence shows signs of pity and horror.*
3 *Per.* Where is my father's corse?
Scorn you to answer? you did rack his age
To sport your children, and your hounds lapp'd up
The life-blood as it spouted from his wounds—
1 *Per.* Your goblets foam'd, and the feast shook with laughter
In mockery of our wounds; and when your captives

Exhausted sunk, ye rous'd them to new life
By pangs unknown before.
Peruvians. Force back the guard.
Perish, fell monster!
[*Peruvians forcing Almagro from the over-powered Guard.*]
Guard. Rescue him.

VILLOMA, ZAMA, ARCAL, *enter.*

Vil. Peruvians.
Per. Strike, ere Villoma save him.
Per. Die.
Vil. My children!
Have you no pity? have you chang'd your nature?
Oh spare him.
Zama. Hear, Peruvians, know ye not
His voice who bids you spare. It is Villoma's.
Ye are his children, all—
Per. Perish, fell monster—
Zama. [*rushing amid them in act to murder Almagro.*] Oh sun, withdraw thy light! murder in Cuzco
An unarm'd captive!—not on him—on me—
Here, on a Coya, daughter of your god,
Satiate your vengeance.
[*They all fling down their weapons at Zama's feet.*
Alm. Lady! not for me
Hazard your life. Oh Spain! are these barbarians?
Peruvians. [*kneeling to Villoma.*] Forgive thy children! yet, oh holy father,

Look down with eye of pity on our sufferings.
Resistance now is vain. Priest of the sun,
Resign the fort. Behold us bow'd to earth
With want, and woe, and famine.
Vil. How resign it?
A solemn adjuration binds my soul
Ne'er to admit the Spaniard, till Zamorin
Here yields the fort, or, to confirm his will,
Sends back the hallow'd bracelet.
Zama. Ne'er again
Shall Cuzco hail that consecrated chain.
Zamorin is no more.
Alm. Nay, weep not, lady!
Zamorin yet is living.
Zama. Living! Spaniard!
Vil. My sons, depart in peace. [*they go.*] Stranger! approach—
Learn from your foe to pity and protect
Him whom your pow'r can crush.
Alm. Are these, barbarians?
They told me that Peruvians were at best,
Men but in shape; in soul, of brutal nature.
We Spaniards know you not.
Vil. And who art thou
From whose astonish'd soul the voice of praise
Sounds like reproof? say, why hast thou assail'd
Basely this fortress, while thy perjur'd chief
Detains our hostage?
Alm. Bid Pizarro answer:
This recks not me: I broke no sacred truce.

Vil. Your vows ye break at will: our word was sacred.
What but leagued treason urged you to assail
This rock in frantic insolence?
Alm. My lance
Was met by valiant men.
Vil. Presumptuous youth!
Declare the truth, nor let deceitful words
Draw righteous vengeance down.
Alm. Cease thy vain threats:
I speak not at command.
Vil. Proud man!
Zama. My father,
He looks like one whom gentleness may gain
More than harsh force compel. I pray thee, stranger!
Aught know'st thou of Zamorin?
Alm. He yet lives—
So rumour speaks—but—by Pizarro, held,—
As I am—bound.
Zama. A hostage! and in bonds!
Inhuman men.
Alm. All are not such, fair lady!
Vil. Who art thou, and what urg'd thy rash assault?
Alm. A passion, haply, to Peru unknown:
Glory. Had conquest crown'd me, Spain had rank'd
Mine, with proud names, whose mention fires the soul,
Columbus, Cortez, and far-fam'd Pizarro.
Fair dames of proud Castille, at solemn jousts
Had wing'd their knights to victory, with the praise

Of young Almagro: and, if here I perish
I have not sham'd my sire.
Vil. Almagro's son,
Whose army fronts our warriors, while Pizarro
Encamps beneath these walls?
Alm. Brief let me be.
Scarce had I landed on this coast, (few days
Now past) with men, and steeds, and warlike stores,
Trebling Pizarro's battle, when my sire,
Yet weak with uncur'd wounds, to me resign'd
His host, and high command. Thus, arm'd with pow'r
And due authority, I sought Pizarro,
With fair proposal, instantly to join
Our squadrons, and disperse your numbers—
Vil. [*interrupting him*] How!
Rash insolence of youth! captive, beware!
Look on those bonds.
Alm. Your multitudes dispers'd,
Then, if that haughty chieftain yet disown'd
The signet that I bore, the Emperor's grant
Of Cuzco to my sire, to force compliance.
I came, Pizarro heard, and taunting, bade me
Fix on your rocks my flag; there crown Almagro:
And with bold impress charge my maiden shield,
Yet bloodless, and but prickt with tilting points.
He spake, and smil'd in scorn: my blood boil'd in me:
And forth I sallied where your host beheld me,
Ere yet my followers join'd, pois'd on my lance
Vault o'er the moat, and with adventurous grasp
From rock to rock climb up the craggy fort,

And chase your warriors, till one daring chief
Seiz'd me unawares, and reckless of his life,
In the deep flood plung'd with me. More I know not.
You best can tell how rescu'd from the flood
You drew me forth, and when in swoon I lay,
What warriors stript an unresisting captive,
And thus enslav'd: you best can tell the death
That now awaits me.

Vil. Fear not—

Alm. Fear! we Spaniards
Shrink not from death.

Zama. Thy life redeems the hostage,
Almagro for Zamorin, chief for chief.

Alm. No—rather than consent to my release,
Pizarro, in thy sight, beneath these walls
Would stab the hostage. 'Tis not life I seek:
A Spanish chief in Cuzco manacled,
Almagro's son slav'd by Peruvian bonds,
Seeks but the consolation of the grave
To hide in death his shame. Yet—I will sue thee:
And bend the suppliant knee: a father's woe
Weighs on my heart. You are a man of mercy;
Send back my corse—my lance—a father's gift,
To old Almagro. It will soothe the warrior
To hang it o'er my tomb. And let your herald
Say, how I fought, how died—

Zama. [*flinging herself at Villoma's feet.*] Oh let me sue
For mercy. Such as he, in prime of life,
Zamorin: and each tear that falls for him,
Pleads for this captive youth. And haply too

While on his doom we pause, and calmly weigh
What caution dictates, in his native land
One, sad as Zama, at the thought of war
Presses a bleeding heart, and mourns as dead,
Him yet alive.

Vil. Zama, pronounce his doom.

Zama. Freedom. Zamorin's wife from bondage frees thee. [*Unclasping his chains.*

Alm. Touch not these chains: I am a man disgrac'd.

Zama. What mean your words? Spaniard, the sons of Cuzco
Deem guilt, and not misfortune a disgrace.
Youth, thou art free: in victory's ruthless hour,
Remember Zama. To Pizarro go,
Say how Peruvian conquerors treat their captives,
So bid him treat his hostage.

Alm. I will force him
To free the hostage, or no more Almagro
Will woo renown in arms, nor wield a lance
Where love and glory point the warrior's course.
Expect thy lord: my life for his is pledg'd.
Cuzco, ere night, shall view within her walls
Zamorin, or Almagro. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Pizarro's Camp beneath Cuzco.

PIZARRO.

Piz. Perish the Indian who resists Pizarro!
Perish, Zamorin! not to rouse defiance
I lur'd that chieftain hither. Had my threats
Or proffer'd realms avail'd, not Cuzco's tow'rs
And fruitful empire, but the western world
Had own'd me sovereign. In that Inca's soul,
Tho' mild and merciful, a firmness reigns
That knows not fear: but sooner at my bidding
Would Andes' rock on its eternal base
Than his calm spirit yield—

JUAN *enters.*

My brother! Juan—
Hast thou succeeded? but—another day!—
And on that captur'd fort our chiefs shall grasp
Wealth boundless as their wish.

Juan. Some I have gain'd,
Leaders of note: others, Almagro's gold
Heapt from far Chili, and rich realms between,
Has brib'd to quit thy standard: Chaves, Fernandez,
Haro, and dauntless Lerma.

Piz. Dark-brow'd Lerma!
Almagro's golden ingots outweigh mine.
Juan. No. His stern spirit broods o'er fancied wrongs,
He has not smil'd since Cassamarca's fight.
I met him mid his squadron, near him stood
A herald from Almagro: at my offers
Th' indignant chieftain smil'd, and loud exclaim'd
That all might hear, "Base souls by gold are brib'd,
"Brave men by glory: from wrong'd Lerma's lip,
"Ere I depart, this day, your chief shall learn
"What gifts must gain a warrior."
Piz. Haughty spirit!
Juan. Your force is much diminish'd. Sixty horsemen:
Of pikes and cross-bows full an hundred gone.
Had not the flood, in which we saw him plung'd,
O'er young Almagro clos'd, and yonder signal
That sweeps the rocks confirm'd Gulaxa's word,
Despair had bow'd my spirit.
Piz. On that Inca
My trust is fixt: and, if his art prevail,
This day, ere night-fall, yon rock-structur'd fort
By strength of mortal arm impregnable,
Shall at my summon's yield: and Cuzco's tow'rs,
Proud palaces, and mansions of delight,
Rich fanes, and gold-roof'd temples, pav'd with gems,
Wait my disposal. Then—the rebel chiefs
Who swell Almagro's numbers, at my feet
Shall prostrate fall, and shout Pizarro's name,

While from yon battlements I view beneath me,
Day after day, Almagro's vaunted host
Perish without a blow.

Herald *enters.*

Her. [*to Pizarro.*] My lord! the chiefs
Who faithful to your banner yet remain,
Now claim your presence.
Piz. Claim it! [*after deliberation.*]—Bring Zamorin,
Th' unyielding Inca, where my chiefs in council
Shall mark his dreadful doom. [*Herald goes.*] This will, methinks,
Sooth them awhile, ere conquest on yon walls
Waves my proud banner. Juan—thou attend.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the Tent of the Chiefs in Council.

Alvarados, Benalcazar, *Spanish Chiefs.*

Alv. Comrades! be firm. Brave Benalcazar, hear me.
I grant our loss is heavy, Chaves, Fernandez,
Haro, and valiant Lerma: chiefs of proof:
Men of wise voice in council, and whose arm
Chain'd victory to their standard. They are gone:
And we have cause for grief, none for despair,
If we who yet are left, view not each other

With that cold eye of timorous distrust,
That ill befits a soldier.

[*Towards the conclusion of this speech,* PIZARRO *enters, and takes his seat as Chief of the Council. After long silence, Pizarro rises.*]

Piz. Why thus silent?
Let none despair. Time was, fame-honour'd chiefs!
When by pale fear, and woe, and want encircled,
On a lone island near this coast I drew
Thus, with my sword, a line: "Behold (I said)
"On this side, danger and immortal glory:
"There, safety and dishonour." Blush, Castile!
All, all but thirteen warriors, left Pizarro.
There, the heav'n-destin'd conquerors of Peru
Month after month obscurely lay conceal'd,
And glory knew us not: but, when our foot
Once trod upon this coast, our second step
Tow'r'd on the neck of monarchs.

Alv. On this sword
I laid, in pledge of faith, a soldier's hand,
Ere victory blazing round Pizarro's brow
Had lur'd the fickle noon-swarm. The bright sun
Allur'd not me, nor shall the storm appal.
Pizarro's cause is mine: and may this arm
Witner in battle, when I turn my lance
Against his helm.

Piz. Brave chief, behold this gem:
'Twas king Ataliba's: he died, and left us
Heir to his wealth. Take, and transmit this jewel

To thy son's sons, to late posterity,
As a memorial that Pizarro knew
Thy worth, nor lightly honour'd it.

Herald *enters.*

Her. My lord,
The hostage waits thy will.

Piz. Bring him before us. [*Herald goes.*
Your well-weigh'd voice—I am but one among you—
Shall fix his doom.

Alv. Fain would I, front to front
Behold him. Since that hard-contested battle
When singly he assail'd me, as I slew
His routed host, I ne'er have seen that warrior.
You still refus'd me.

Piz. I had ever hope
So to have sway'd him, that his soul had bow'd
Submissive to your will: my threats avail'd not.
Yet—I have witness'd men who boldly brav'd
A single front, turn pale and quake at sight
Of chiefs in council.

Herald *enters with* ZAMORIN.

Alv. In his air and form
Reigns simple grandeur, and on that calm front
I trace the visible impress of a mind
That yields not to base fear.

[*Zamorin regardless of the Council, unclasps a bracelet, and crushes it, link after link.*

Zam. [*To himself.*] Oh sacred charge!

Pledge of a monarch's love, a nation's trust,
Farewell for ever. [*Kisses it.*
Alv. Why, Peruvian, thus
Unclasp that bracelet from thy arm, why rend it
Link after link?
Zam. [*to himself.*] Not their unhallow'd hands:
Their touch shall not pollute thee. So, [*crushing it.*] escape
Their sacrilegious avarice—nor—perhaps—
Attest Zamorin's frailty.
Alv. Peruvian!
We are not by your spoils so lur'd, so slav'd
By every glittering toy, that we had stript thee
Of that poor ornament. Brave Inca, say,
Why dost thou tread that bauble under foot?
Zam. I'll answer thee, when it is crush'd to atoms.
Say. [*To Pizarro.*] Have I leave to speak?
Piz. We Spaniards, Inca,
Do not condemn our prisoners unheard.
Zam. Man, man, thou mock'st me. Look, where thou art thron'd,
Look, where I stand. And hast thou heart to mock me?
Alv. Thou shalt have patient hearing.
Piz. We attend.
Zam. It ever hath been custom with our kings,
From great Huana Capac, our first monarch,
The offspring of the sun, when they select
A leader of their forces, round his arm
To bind the chain which in the hour of peace
Circles their neck: that bracelet, linkt by hands

Celestial, all Peru so sacred deems,
That Cuzco's chiefs beholding it would yield
The city, and the temple of their god.
Who bears that bracelet, speaks, and is obey'd
Like one from heav'n. No eye shall see it more:
'Tis crush'd to atoms.

Alv. Wherefore?

Zam. I receiv'd it
From good Huascar, on the very night
He perish'd, by the fell usurper slain,
Sent by Ataliba, whom you did murder.

[*The Council murmurs enraged.*

Ben. To torture with him.

Zam. Whence this sudden rage?

Ben. Away with him.

Zam. In what have I offended?
Or can you not in patience hear the deed
That you had heart to act?

Alv. Hear, hear him, comrades!
The language of plain truth, howe'er it gall me,
Is not unwelcome to a soldier's ear.
On with your speech. You shall not interrupt him.

Zam. When I came forth your hostage, not your prisoner,
I charg'd Villoma to refuse all terms
If by that chain unvouch'd; for I had heard
That ye had instruments of hellish pow'r
To force the tongue to utterance: now to feign
What the soul knew was false, and now deny
The truth that is our birthright from above.
I never shrunk, as these deep scars may witness,

From wounds in war, but what ye might inflict
When cool the blood, I knew not. This I know,
That man is frail: and doubts, yea—fears came o'er me,
Lest in the heart here bosom'd, human frailty
Might underneath the agony of torture,
Betray its weakness.

Ben. Then bid yonder fort
Instantly yield, or the keen rack shall goad
Your quivering limbs.

Zam. I now can stand the trial:
For what the tongue may rave when nature groans
In madd'ning torture, now has no avail.
The chain is crush'd.

GULAXA *enters in haste.*

Piz. Gulaxa!

Gul. Brave Pizarro,
Art thou prepar'd to lead thy host in arms,
When I advance the signal?

Piz. Yes. Go forth—
And reign at Cuzco.

Zam. Reign! no—base usurper.

Piz. Pizarro crowns him.

Zam. On his brow your hand
May fix a crown: but you are strangers to us.
'Tis not the diadem that awes our souls,
Peru reveres her father in her king:
Our's is the heart's pure homage.

Gul. Hear, Zamorin.

Cuzco obeys my signal: yet—I know
There are within yon fort who still resist.
Alone thy influence sways them: bid them yield:
Enough of blood has stream'd. They who oppose me,
Shall surely die.

Zam. I pity whom thou spar'st.

Gul. Think that thou view'st Villoma prone on earth,
His grey hairs stain'd with gore: think on thy Zama,
When ruthless war unchains his triple fiends,
Rapine, and Lust, and Murder.

Zam. Lord of Nature!
Who in yon orb of living light, to earth,
Faint shadowest forth thy glory: pow'r supreme!
Who for high ends to man unsearchable,
Send'st forth thy dreadful ministers of vengeance,
Tempest and spotted plague, and flame-wing'd bolts;
And now, along the violated deep
Hast sent, more fell than tempest, plague, and fire,
From other worlds, the outcast of mankind
To waste this realm: to thee, oh Sun! I call:
And join my voice to that which mute to man,
Pleads audibly in heav'n, and in each drop
Of innocent blood, spilt upon earth, draws down
Dire retribution on the murderer's brow.
Hence—murderer!

[*Gulaxa departs. As he goes loud shouts are heard. Voices without.*] Almagro. Hail—Almagro.

Herald *enters.*

Her. [*to Pizarro.*] My lord—Almagro's son, on foaming steed,
Speeds thro' your camp: with him his far-fam'd leaders,
Herrada, Garcias, and renown'd Orgognez.
And—from your squadrons, many a fickle soldier
Gathers around them. Hark! [*shouts heard.*] the air resounds
With shouts of young Almagro.
Piz. Chiefs, be firm—
On you Pizarro rests: and plunder'd Cuzco
Shall all your toils o'erpay—

Amid shouts of Almagro—Young ALMAGRO, HERRADA, GARCIAS, *and* ORGOGNEZ, *enter.*

Ha! who art thou?
Art thou a spirit risen from the dead,
To haunt me at mid-day?
Alm. None from the dead.
Herrada! stay with me: go, trusty Garcias,
Haste to my sire: relate what here has past.
Orgognez, ere three hours have wing'd their flight,
Be it thy charge to lead my chosen squadrons
To storm this camp, if yet Pizarro brave us.
[*Orgognez and Garcias depart.*
[*To Pizarro's Council.*] Are these the chiefs whom terror chain'd to earth,

When o'er the fosse I sprung, and scal'd the rock?
And slept your swords when one of Spanish blood
Sunk in your sight?

Alv. The sword and lance were pow'rless
Gainst that proud fort where our good cannon fail'd.
But—when I saw thee mid surrounding foes
Rush singly unappall'd, old Alvarados
Heard on his back war's iron harness ring.
Methought in each old scar the whizzing shaft
Sunk, as when first it pierc'd me.

Alm. Hear, Pizarro—
Dismiss thy chiefs: let us confer in secret.

Piz. Retire awhile, my friends.

[*The Chiefs depart.*

Alm. [*staying Zamorin.*] Is this the hostage?

Zam. You see Zamorin.

Alm. Go not hence, brave man.
Thro' me thy Zama greets thee.

Zam. Name her not:
The very sound unmans me. Zama, Zama,
Oh may'st thou never hear what I have suffer'd!

Alm. [*to Pizarro.*] Tho' thou resist my sire's just claim, and mock
The Emperor's sacred signet—

Piz. [*interrupting him.*] Heav'n forefend!

Alm. Yet we may meet on terms: and, in that hope,
Before thy warriors I reproach'd thee not,
But face to face here breathe my just rebuke.
Yet know I to forgive, and once aton'd,
Remember not th' offense.

Piz. Then—we are friends.
Declare the terms.

Alm. First, free this hostage.

Zam. Me?
Spaniard! art thou aware of thy demand?

Piz. Why free this man, alike thy foe and mine?

Alm. Their fortress I assail'd, they spar'd my life;
The sire of this brave man unclasp'd my chains,
The wife of this brave man spake comfort to me,
And when I seem'd in sorrow, look'd on me
As one who views a brother.

Zam. Zama saw
Distress, nor ask'd when misery pierc'd her soul,
Whether a friend or foe requir'd relief:
'Twas human nature suffer'd, Zama pitied.
Spaniard, beneath our roof, in Cuzco's walls,
The life of man is sacred.

Piz [*to Almagro.*] You did promise
To free this chief.

Alm. My life for his is pledg'd.

Piz. Say, we release him, you require no more.

Alm. Nought, but our right, the Emperor's grant.

JUAN *enters.*

Juan. Pizarro,
The beck'ning signal waves from yonder fort,
Shall I array the troops?

Piz. Haste, quickly arm them.
I, I will lead them. [*Juan goes.*

Alm. Trust not to that signal.

Piz. You plead the Emperor's grant! behold my title,
Not penn'd in characters that man can forge,
Make and unmake at will. [*Takes his helmet off.*]
'Tis charter'd here,
Imprinted by the iron hand of war,
On this time-furrow'd front: and till thy sword
Has raz'd it out, look not to rule at Cuzco.
Each dent, and honour'd scar that seams this head,
Will yawn afresh, wide as when first the blood
Gush'd from the wound, whene'er Pizarro yields
What conquest gave him on the well-fought field.
Here ends our conference. Guard! confine this Indian.

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Court before the Temple of the Sun.

VILLOMA *and* ZAMA.

Zama. Oh! go not forth; to others trust the charge:
'Tis not a woman's fear: each voice reports
Signs of dire portent.
Vil. Earth has rock'd ere now,
And red volcanos roar'd—
Zama. Not these alone,
Nor lakes that heav'd when not a light leaf wav'd,
Nor fiery armies clanging in the skies:
But from the southern turret one who watch'd
Last night— [*Priests burst in.*
Priest. Hear, hear, Villoma—
Vil. Why thus burst
Unbidden? Wherefore shake thy limbs?
Priest. Good father!
Vil. Speak, holy man—
Priest. It was our charge this day,
To watch the heav'ns: noon's solemn hour drew near,
When, as we gaz'd observant of the God,
To hymn his mid-day pomp, at once from view,
While not a cloud obscur'd the golden sky,

The sun withdrew his light: and wide o'er heav'n
From the dark orb thick gathering vapours spread
Ceaselessly streaming. As our hearts died in us—
Oh horror!

Vil. Speak—

Priest. The temple's ponderous gates
Mov'd by an unseen hand, and dreadful groans,
As from a struggling spirit loath to part,
Burst from the riven shrine—

Zama. These, these are sent
Dire warnings from above. Oh, go not forth.

Vil. At this dread hour when treason shakes the realm,
And brother against brother arms his hand,
I will not to another trust that charge
Which duty binds on me. The will of heaven,
More audible than prodigies and portents,
Bids me defend my country.

ORCAS *enters.*

Orc. Haste, Villoma!
The secret signal floats above the rock:
Now, mid the traitors, in the cavern's gloom
Where the sun never shone, Gulaxa leagues
The murderous band.

Vil. Say, are th'appointed guard
Drawn forth, and well advis'd?

Orc. They wait thy word,
And call on thee to lead them. [*Orcas goes.*

Vil. Say, I come—

Thou, if this hand, oh Sun, that clasps thy shrine,
Has ne'er from youth to age been rais'd to thee
But to invoke from heav'n, on all beneath,
Thy universal blessings, hear my pray'r!
Accept this life, a sacrifice for all!
Strike here, and save thy realm! — My child, farewell!

Zama. I will not leave thee at this dreadful hour:
Zamorin's wife has sway among the chiefs,
Zamorin's spirit breath'd in softer tone,
E'en in a woman's voice has pow'r to daunt
The soul of guilt.

Vil. Think of thy boding fears—

Zama. I have no fear: thy life, thy life's in danger. [*Exeunt.*

Scene, a Cave.

GULAXA, RIMAC, Conspirators.

Gul. Your stations are assign'd, and ye have sworn
What time Pizarro's trumpet rends the air
To yield the fortress—

Rim. Yes, 'tis sworn, Gulaxa,
But where is Arcal?

Gul. On the middle rampire
That skirts the ledge of rocks, his eye o'erlooks
The Spanish camp.

Rim. Trust not that man, Gulaxa:
His life, methinks, is bosom'd in Villoma,
That he so fears to wound him—

VILLOMA, ZAMA, ORCAS, Guard, *burst in.*

Vil. Seize their weapons.
Rim. No—not if this avail.
Zama. [*catching his lifted hand.*] Here, traitor! strike.—
A daughter's hand has sav'd thee. [*To Villoma.*
Vil. Drag them forth,
Drag forth these serpents from their darksome cave:
Th' all seeing sun shall glare upon their shame.
[*They drag them forth.*
Traitors, your doom is death. Kneel not to me.
[*To Gulaxa.*
I cannot pardon thee.
Gul. Nor do I ask it,
But on such terms as shall redeem my soul
From galling infamy. I boldly claim
Not mercy, but high praise, and just reward
Due to a deed that to remotest time
Shall consecrate my memory.
Vil. Say on.
Gul. The signal waves; the Spaniards soon will march:
I know the impatience of Pizarro's soul:
That chief will lead them. At the lower fort
Fix me to guide his foot-step up the rock:
Then, ere he cross the outward bridge, this hand
Shall pierce his breast.
Zama. Oh more than serpent fell,
He only wounds, instinctively, in rage,

The foot that bruises him: but thou, oh man!
Thou with deliberate thought, pondering the means,
Would'st stab the friend who leans upon thy breast,
And fell him with thy hand, held forth in act
Of seeming kindness.

Vil. And for this thou claim'st
Praise and reward: such recompense as suits
Such actions, be thy meed. When guilt, like thine,
Stalks forth unpunish'd, he who pardons it
Incurs the wrath of heav'n. Thy doom is death.

Orc. [*looking out.*] Almagro's son, who left this morn our walls,
Returns—and with him—one—

Zama. Perhaps—Zamorin.

Vil. [*To Orcas who goes out.*] Conduct them hither. Oh! all gracious heav'n!
Thro' dark and intricate mazes hid from man
Thy mercy lightens, as the golden sun
Bursts from the veil of clouds.

ORCAS *enters, conducting* ALMAGRO *and* HERRADA.

Zama. It is not—no—
'Tis not Zamorin. Why that look of woe?
[*To Almagro.*
Why art thou silent? oh! he is no more.

Alm. I left him living: but—you see me here—

Zama. I understand you. He will not live long.

Alm. I left him at the mercy of Pizarro.
Oh, if thou wish to hear his last farewell,
Or see him more, away: this chief [*Herrada.*] shall guard thee.

Rely on him, as on this willing victim,
Pledg'd for Zamorin's life.
Gul. [*as Zama is rushing out.*] Stay, Zama, stay!
But grant me life, [*to Villoma.*] and I will mark the means
To free the hostage. To her heart again
Zama shall clasp her lord.
Vil. Speak—thou art pardon'd.
Gul. [*pointing to Almagro.*] Lo, in this chief, Pizarro's fellest foe:
The wish most harbour'd in Pizarro's heart,
Is this man's death: haste, proffer in exchange
His corse, and hail Zamorin.
Zama. No—fell traitor!
First, let Zamorin die, and with him, Zama.
[*To Herrada.*] Spaniard! in thee I trust. My sire—farewell.
[*Zama rushes out, accompanied by Herrada.*
Vil. Haste, haste, restrain her flight—my daughter: Zama!
Perfidious murderer! [*to Gulaxa.*] No. Thou shalt not die:
It now were mercy. When Pizarro, swol'n
With pride of promis'd victory, leads his host
Against this fort, and summons forth his slaves,
Then—to confound the conqueror, cast before him
This traitor—chain'd. So in thy doom, that chief
Shall dread his destiny.
[*To Orcas.*] Be this thy charge. [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to Pizarro's Camp.

PIZARRO *comes from his Tent, at the sound of Trumpets at a distance.*

Piz. Here will I cross their march—
By Saint Iago,
Would that smooth sounds, or words of lofty tone
Might cool these fiery spirits! 'till yon rock
Barr'd my free progress, their resistless course
Swept o'er Peru, from realm to conquer'd realm,
Following from the east on Victory's eagle wing
The sun, that like a harbinger before us,
Lit our long march of glory. [*a trumpet.*] Hark—
a trumpet!
The sound of men in arms.

LERMA *and his* Host *enter*

Ler. Pizarro.
Piz. Lerma!
Ler. Pedro de Lerma. [*lifting up his vizor.*]
Look upon him. Halt!
Comrades in arms!
Piz. Brave warrior! at this hour
Why cas'd in steel with these thy valiant men?
No herald summon'd thee.
Ler. I march, Pizarro,
To join Almagro's standard. Some have fled
Like men, guilt-sham'd, as if they fear'd thy frown.

I come, as chief meets chief, as foe fronts foe,
To say that thou hast wrong'd me.

Piz. No—brave warrior.

Ler. How. Thou remember'st not? The injurer
Can smile on whom he wrong'd, and calmly tender
His hand in pledge of friendship! Say, Pizarro,
Hast thou forgot the memorable day,
When swol'n by autumn floods, th' Apurimac
Barr'd our pursuit? when, on its crags, your host
Shrunk back, and nought was heard, when paus'd the gust,
But the flood's ceaseless roar, who, foremost, spurr'd
His steed careering on the pendulous bridge,
Which, o'er the torrent, wreath'd from rock to rock,
Shook its light net-work waving with each wind?

Piz. 'Tis fresh in my remembrance. Valiant Lerma,
Thy steed first cross'd it.

Ler. You remember that!
Then—when the Indians ambush'd 'mid the cliffs,
Fell on our struggling rear, you bad Henriquez
Charge with the lances. Was not that my post?

Piz. I saw thee not.

Ler. The routed Indians saw me,
Who hemm'd Alvarez round: I rescued him:
And heard, at my return, Henriquez' name
Echoed from rank to rank.

Piz. Forget th' offence.
Since then long time has past, and Lerma's merits
Have not been unrewarded.

Ler. Years on years

Heal not the wound where injur'd honour bled;
Once felt, and ne'er forgotten. So, farewell.
You know this raven plume, that oft in fight
Has wing'd your troops to victory: Pizarro,
Avoid it, and beware of Lerma wrong'd!

Piz. Farewell, stern Lerma, nor forget this blade
When it unplumes thy helm. Avoid Pizarro!

[*They part different ways.*

Scene changes to another part of Pizarro's Camp.

ZAMORIN.

Zam. The stir and shout of the tumultuous camp
Loud ring from tent to tent: ere-long yon fort,
Impregnable by pow'r of mortal arm,
Shall yield its strength, and treason ope its gates
At stern Pizarro's voice. Oh heav'n-born babe!
Sole relic of the race sent down to earth
To bless this realm! no more my arm shall guard thee.
Villoma—Zama—hold my madd'ning brain!
Not that—not that—no—the fixt earth shall first
Fall from it shatter'd base: and thou, oh Sun,
Rush from thy sphere, ere guilt's foul touch pollute
Her pure and sinless bosom.

[*Juan's voice heard without.*

Juan. When the trumpet
Summons the warriors, to Pizarro lead them:
Now strictly guard the tent: let none approach.

ZAMA *speaks in entering.*

Zamorin!

Zam. 'Tis her voice. It cannot be.
Once, once again charm'd Fancy! breathe that sound!

Zama. [*embracing him.*] Zamorin.

Zam. 'Tis herself—angel of light.

Zama. Yet, yet thou liv'st, and these fond arms enfold thee.
Oh I had fear that never, never more
This eye had gaz'd on thine.

Zam. Yes—I will clasp thee,
And, ere we part, in thy celestial look
Taste the pure transport of a world, where love
'Mid spirits of the blest, links soul with soul
In everlasting union. Yet—my Zama!
I would we had not met.

Zama. Oh say not that!

Zam. Why gaze thus on me with unsated eye?

Zama. Oh! thou art strangely alter'd, since we parted.
A few, few days. Keen grief has wrung thy soul,
And each worn feature, as I gaze on thee,
Wounds me with mute reproach. Had I been here,
Thou had'st less keenly suffer'd.

Zam. That alone,
I had but that alone to sooth my anguish:
Thou knew'st it not—

Zama. Yet, sure, had I been here,

Thy soul, tho' pierced with anguish, had found peace
While pillow'd on my breast thy brow repos'd.
And I had watch'd thy sleep, and if my tears
Shed in mute wretchedness, had chanc'd to stray
Down thy pale cheek, my lip had kiss'd them off,
And met thee with a smile.

Zam. The past, oh Zama!
Wakes not a pang. Would thou wert now away!

Zama. Never, Zamorin, will I leave thee more:
None, none shall part us. Thou wert once unkind,
Yet was it kindly meant! but never more
Force me to quit thee: nor dissolve the dream
So sweet, of hope, that whispers to my soul
That I may sooth thy grief. Alas! Zamorin,
You hid from me the woe that nature suffers,
But left me to the nameless agonies
Of fear's unreal shapings. Yet—my husband—

Zam. Why that dread silence? Speak thy inmost wish.

Zama. The fond indulgence of a woman's weakness
Must not unman thee: these are ruthless men;
And, if thou deem, that death's unpitied pangs
Will less severely wound thee, if thy Zama
Be far away: I, now, tho' loth, will leave thee.
And, yet, mid these rude men, whose brutal rage
Ends not with life—

Zam. Cease, cease: you wring my heart.

Zama. To leave thy untomb'd corse expos'd to scorn

And insults that the tongue wants strength to utter!
Oh by that love which made this earth a heav'n,
By the blest vow that made us one, refuse not
My last request!—

Zam. I was prepar'd for death:
Thou hast unman'd me: 'tis for thee I fear.

Zama. Thou weep'st, nor longer can'st deny my pray'r:
'Tis what religion prompts, and these bad men,
Unhallow'd as they are, will not refuse it.
'Tis but to close the eye which cannot see
The hand that weighs it down, and smooth the brow
Insensate to the touch which presses it.
Nor will they envy me a little spot
Where I may hide thee in the grave, and pour
O'er thy cold corse a pray'r, while death steals o'er
The lip that breathes farewell. [*Trumpet sounds.*

Zam. Hark! that dread signal!

JUAN *enters with a Guard.*

Juan. Bring the Peruvians forth.

Zam. Art thou prepar'd,
My Zama?

Zama. Yes, Zamorin, thus—[*embraces him.*] to perish,
And hail the stroke that shall in death unite us.

END OF ACT THE THIRD.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Fort of Cuzco.

PIZARRO, ALVARADOS, BENALCAZAR, ZAMORIN, ZAMA. *Soldiers arrayed.*

Piz. Comrades in arms!
Who here have watch'd, while through each labouring change
The cold moon slowly toil'd, and at the base
Of these vast rocks, seen the red balls ye launch'd
Fall from the unscath'd fortress! Ye, whom war,
By irksome trials in the lingering seige
Has taught to bear the iron yoke that galls
Proud valour, while your spirit glow'd within you,
Like the train'd war-steed, balancing his pace
While his eye flames with fire; lo, there your spoils!
[*Pointing to the Fort.*
Drag from unfathom'd caves exhaustless wealth,
And jems that pale the noon-beam: on yon height
Repose, and one by one tell o'er your scars:
And where the arrow pierc'd your batter'd mail,
Close it with plates of gold—
Ben. Now, give the signal—
Thy troops demand the spoil.
Piz. O'er yon proud temple
When victory waves my banner, Benalcazar,

Fix on the battlement this Inca's head,
So shall they perish, all who stood before us
Barring our way to conquest.

Zama. Man of blood—
All—[*going to the different chiefs.*] are ye all alike?
Thou aged warrior, [*to Alvarados.*]
Whose silver beard shows like my father's! spare him!

Zam. Zama! submit in silence.

Piz. [*to his herald.*] Sound the trumpet.
Summon the fortress.

Alv. First, Pizarro, hear me—
This corselet bears the dint of many a wound
That bought thee conquest: gold and gems I ask not.
I claim his freedom.

Zama. Thou wert born of woman,
And drops of pity mingled in the breast
That gave thee milk.

Alv. [*to Zama.*] Hang not around me, thus;
Mine is no heart of flint: since she who bore me,
Wept o'er her farewell blessing, this old cheek
Has never felt a tear: the drops would scald
My eye unwonted to them—

Ben. Hear, Pizarro,
Our followers murmur at this long delay—

Alv. [*to Ben.*] When Alvarados speaks, he will be heard—
In the last action, when his army fled,
I found this Inca with the fight o'erdone
Stretch'd on a heap, Indians and Spaniards slain.

I bad him yield : he answer'd not, but swiftly
As one just fresh in onset, wrench'd my lance
From its firm rest : and, as I grasp'd my sword,
With my own weapon, thro' this iron gauntlet,
Thus, pierc'd me : and may venom lurk in the wound,
If Alvarados see him basely slain
As he had ne'er known valour.

Zama. [*kisses his hand.*] Zama's lip
Shall head the wound —

Piz. [*to Alv.*] Pizarro is thy debtor.
When the proud fortress yields, release the hostage.
Summon the place —

Zam. [*advancing.*] Pizarro, stay—That fort
Hangs on my word : be warn'd, and now release me:
Or rage will prompt strange deeds, which shall outlast
The fame that waits on victory—Peru
Once more in arms demands her chief : release him,
Him whom you cannot fear—

Ben. Free him, Pizarro—
Our scanty band scatters at will their myriads
Like dust before the blast —

Zam. Boast not, proud warrior !
We are not cas'd in mail, we forge not swords
Edg'd to cut steel, we launch not hidden fires
That flash, and man is dead, nor mount on steeds
That crush the foe beneath their iron hoof —
We fight, as nature dictates : ye are train'd
To slaughter as an art : and in mid fight
Ye speak, and are obey'd, and turn the tide

Of battle with a word. But, with our shields
Twin'd rushes of the brook, reed shafts, and spears
Unbarb'd with iron, and for high-plum'd casque
A wreath of flow'rs pluck'd from our native soil,
Arm'd in our country's cause, we will once more
Front you without a fear—

Ben. [*to Piz.*] These valiant men
Have earn'd rewards beyond a monarch's ransom,
And claim the promis'd spoil. We come not hither
Thus to be mock'd by slaves.

Piz. Draw your brave swords,
Wave your triumphant standards, peal the trumpet.
Yield to Pizarro's power!

Orc. [*on the battlement.*] Where is the chief
Who thrones and unthrones kings?

Piz. [*advancing.*] Behold Pizarro—

Orc. [*to the guards within the fort.*] Now cast the traitor forth, then, close the gates.

[*Gulaxa is cast forth. He kneels to Pizarro.*

Ben. This is no harbinger of victory.

Alv. [*to Gul.*] Why dost thou clasp his knees? why prone on earth
Thus shrouded close from view, as if thou fear'd'st
That the abhorrent eye should turn from thee
As from a sight unblest?

Zam. Is this the monarch
Whom great Pizarro crown'd?

Piz. Ye mountains! crush me!
Gape earth that I have drench'd with blood, and hide me
In central night!

Ben. [*to Pizarro.*] Where are the promis'd spoils?

Piz. [*confusedly to his army.*] This is not as it seems. It moves your wonder.

Be not alarm'd, my friends: art oft beneath
The semblance of repulse—Oh heav'n and earth!
By all my former fame, and the proud hope
Of greater glory, now for ever gone,
Thou [*to Gulaxa.*] shalt not live.

[*Going to stab him.*

Gul. Stay thy impetuous hand:
I was myself betray'd. Send back your troops.
Yet, yet thou shalt succeed.

Piz. Comrades! retire
A little while: here soon to meet again.
I pray you to the camp.

[*All go but Pizarro, Juan, and Gulaxa.*

Gul. Grant me but life,
Villoma shall obey me.

Piz. Mark me, traitor,
Oh—if false hope deceive me, thou shalt die
In lingering agonies. There, fix my banners,
Now, ere Almagro's swift advancing host
Pluck conquest from my grasp.

Gul. 'Tis in thy pow'r.

Piz. No trifle turns Pizarro from his course.

Gul. You need but feign the act.

Piz. Be brief—reveal it—

Gul. You mark'd that woman whom they lead away.

Piz. Most beautiful. In form, and face, and air,
Peerless, and rarely grac'd.

Gul. You know her rank.
Piz. Zamorin's wife.
Gul. Know you nought else?
Zam. No more.
Gul. She is a daughter of the sun: a Coya.
Piz. [*impatiently.*] Well, well.
Gul. You heed me not. She is a Coya.
Pure in her veins, from our first monarch, flows
Her blood by mortal mixture unprofan'd.
Her father, in yon rock-built temple, serves
The sun, his sire and god,—her life is sacred—
You understand me: let me add no more.
Piz. Her life is sacred. I have heard such tales;
But these vain dreams and visions of weak fancies,
Past with the hearing.
Gul. Oh you misconceive it:
So sacred are their lives, that he who wounds them
Unknowingly, nay, tho' devoid of sense,
Idiot or lunatic, no longer dwells
With man, but from the social tie cut off,
Strays lone on earth, amid the beasts of the wild.
Who slays a Coya, is entomb'd alive,
His race from earth swept off, and e'en the ground
That fed him, hid with stones, which he who passes,
Casts with a curse upon it.
Piz. Then—you mean
That I should slay this daughter of the sun,
If her stern sire refuse to yield the fort.
Gul. You need but threaten it. But ne'er Villoma
Will yield the fort, unsanction'd by Zamorin.
A solemn vow restricts him. Free the hostage:

Let him once more to Cuzco's walls return;
And when Villoma and Zamorin view
The Coya in thy pow'r—
Piz. [*interrupting him.*] It cannot fail—
Juan—delay not—to Zamorin haste;
Release the hostage: this the sole condition,
That young Almagro in yon walls remain
A captive: here, with us, the Coya rests,
Pledge of Zamorin's words. [*Juan goes.*] Guards! seize this traitor, [*Gulaxa.*]
And underneath yon rock that view'd our shame,
In torturing pangs inflict his doom of death.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the Camp.

ZAMORIN *and* ZAMA.

Zam. Oh hapless country! by thy native race
Betray'd to merciless men!
Zama. Yet some remain
Unshaken: from the rest, when thou went'st forth,
Hope fled: from thee the general spirit flow'd
As light from heav'n. Thy influence reign'd in all;
Thou wert their voice in counsel, strength in war,
In woe, sole prop: thou went'st, and dark despair
Fell on the brave: while strange extravagant tales
That made the Spaniards, gods, found sure belief
In the base fear that forg'd them.
Zam. Lost Peru!
Oh could they hear my voice! e'en now, ere night,

Spaniards 'gainst Spaniard, arm'd by demons, clash
In unforgiving contest. Knew they this,
Hope would revive, and with reviving hope,
Th' unconquerable will, and pow'r to quell
Th' invader. Oh! how gladly would I pour
My willing blood upon my native earth,
If my blest voice, in death, might warn Peru
Of fate to come!

JUAN *enters.*

Juan. Zamorin, thou art free:
Go to yon fort, and as becomes the brave,
Defend thy country.
Zam. Gracious heav'n! I thank thee!
Yet much I fear thou mock'st me.
Juan. Thou art free.
Yet—hear the terms.
Zam. I knew that thou did'st mock me.
You need not name them.
Juan. Had thy will consented
To young Almagro's death, the western world
Had own'd thy rule.
Zama. He came, a willing victim
Pledg'd for thy life. [*Zamorin.*] By his kind aid I stand
Here at thy side.
Zam. You may depart.
Juan. Yet—hear me:
Nor price of blood, nor aught unjust I claim:
This only, to detain him in yon fort

A prisoner: Zama, hostage for thy word
Here, in our guard, remains. [*after a long pause.*]
You answer not.
Zama. Yes. He consents. Oh, linger not, Zamorin.
Away, [*aside to Zamorin.*] and warn Peru of fate to come.
Farewell.
Zam. Oh man! thou hadst not hope to move me.
Juan. I understand thee not.
Zam. Then briefly this,
We love our wives, and in that name comprise
All that earth holds most sacred. Thou art answer'd.
Zama. Good Spaniard! I may move him: pray retire. [*Juan goes.*
[*After a long silence.*] You will consent.
Zam. Never.
Zama. You love me not.
Zam. Far beyond life.
Zama. More than thy country's freedom,
Than virtue, self-esteem, vows fix'd in heav'n,
That vow, which when Huascar's spirit fled,
Left on his corse a smile? thee I have lov'd
With that pure ardour, which to rightly name it,
Seems likest adoration: for in thee,
Virtue in human shape, gave me on earth
The foretaste of hereafter. I have liv'd
In that persuasion blest: so let me die.
Oh say, you will consent.
Zam. Art thou aware
Of their intent?

Zama. I think I shall not live.

Zam. 'Tis plain as if Pizarro's voice proclaim'd it:
Thee, they will drag thee underneath the fort,
And in a father's sight—

Zama. [*interrupting him.*] Oh name it not.

Zam. The fiend will pierce thy bosom, if Villoma
Refuse to yield the fort. Zama, a father
Can ne'er endure that sight.

Zama. Thou wilt be with him:
Control him—and then—sooth him, that he feel not
That he has lost a child.

Zam. How shall I stand
Unshaken, when a father's heart drops blood?

Zama. Thou art the column that supports Peru.

Zam. It is thy voice, but thou hast chang'd thy nature.
Thy eye, that gazes on me, sheds no tear,
While mine—

Zama. Spare, pity me, consent, farewell.

Zam. Is it a trivial thing to part with life,
That we no more shall meet as once in bliss?

Zama. Husband! clasp, clasp me in thy arms, then ask
That question, and my heart shall answer thee.
Thus, [*embracing him.*] we will die together. Yet—I fear
Peru's deep curse will load our parting breath.

Zam. Thou more than woman.

Zama. No, a weak, frail woman,
Who has not chang'd her nature: one, from love

Who borrows strength beyond her pow'r, to utter
What breaks her heart. Say, that we live, Zamorin,
And yield the fort; the earth will groan beneath us;
The sun withdraw his light that we have hymn'd,
Both when it rose and set; for still it blest
Our love, whose bond was virtue. We may shun
A scornful world: how shall we shun ourselves,
The worse despisers? Say, we die together;
My father to redeem our corse from insult
Would yield the fort, but—as he tomb'd our bones,
Shame would suspend his blessing. Fix our doom:
My soul, high-strain'd beyond its nature, leans
On thee for aid: oh, by thy virtue, husband,
Give strength to mine. Oh let me die in peace,
And make my memory blest.

[*Rushes out, but returns.*

Zam. Farewell—be blest—
Yet—yet. I have a fear.
How shall I speak it? these are bad, bad men.
When he, who should protect, is far away,
When most his aid is wanted—

Zama. Spous'd in heav'n!
Let not a fear for me disturb thee more!
I can protect myself—depart in peace!

Zam. What thy intent?

Zama. Ere the good Spaniard went,
Who brought me hither, I entreated him
One favour for Almagro's sake: he gave it:
Uncertain as I was what doom might wait me,
I begg'd this steel. I will not rashly use it.

But when all else shall fail, 'twill be no crime
To rescue a pure daughter of the sun,
Thy wife, from touch unblest.

Zam. [*embraces her.*] We meet—in heav'n.

END OF ACT THE FOURTH.

ACT V. SCENE I.

The Sanctuary of the Temple of the Sun. On each side of the Sun, blazing over his Altar, the embalmed bodies of the Peruvian Emperors, from Manco Capac their first Sovereign, seated on golden thrones.

VILLOMA, ZAMORIN, Peruvian Chiefs.

Vil. Defenders of your country!
Approach, and on this bloodless altar lay
Your hands, the plighted witness of your vow.
Peruv. We lay our hands—
Vil. Now vow ye will perform
Whate'er Zamorin urges.
Peruv. Hear our vow!
Zam. [*to Vil.*] Thy duty now is o'er. Oh holy father!
Retire, I pray thee. On their souls I bind
A dreadful charge: their country's freedom claims it:
A charge of blood, whose utterance were unfit
For thy pure ear. [*Vil. departs.*
Zam. Defenders of Peru!
Who here in awful ecstasy adore
High wonders ne'er expos'd to eyes on earth
Save the Sun's hallow'd race: ye, whom pure zeal,

And that great cause which consecrates your vow,
The freedom of your country, here unites
In holiest league: by him, who on yon [*Manco Capac.*] throne,
Now o'er you bends, the founder of our country,
Who from their rocks first drew our sires, and tam'd
To social life, when lone, dispers'd, they wander'd
O'er earth's wide wilderness, where man and beast
Grappled for nature's sov'reignty: by him
Who first unclos'd the unaccustom'd heart
To pity, tenderness, and gentle joys,
Who to the woods and wilds brute passion chas'd,
And taught the interchange of soul with soul,
And sympathies of kin that make on earth
Each home a blissful heav'n:—By Him, my voice
Adjures you, to resist the fell invader,
Or with your realm, religion, freedom, laws,
In one wide wreck expire—

Peruv. We will resist
Or perish.—Lead us forth—

Zam. No, not to war;
'Tis not to battle that I urge you forth,
To combat with a foe whom hell has arm'd
With its own fires.—They told you they were Gods:
You found them hid beneath their iron mail
Men sensible of pain; and I have found them
Men viler than the beast that roams the wild.
Hear, and rejoice, and hymn the song of praise:
Ere night, their hosts by rival chieftains arm'd
In merciless combat meet. Thou stand, Peru,
Aloof, and when th'exhausted victor mourns

His conquest, sweep from earth that groans beneath them
The wretched remnant of these Gods distain'd
With kindred murder.
Peruv. On their head our vengeance!
Zam. Be firm; ye must endure a dreadful test:
I cannot speak it. Yet, whate'er ye view,
E'en tho' Villoma in the dust before you
Strew his grey hairs, and pray you spare his age:
E'en tho' the chief whose charge now binds your souls,
Should, slave of human frailty deny
The oath that past his lip, swear ye will guard
The fort till death.—Vow this, or now resign
Your lives, your liberty, your king, your God,
At fell Pizarro's word.
Peruv. Our oath is fix'd.
Zam. Then ye are conquerors—now, friends! farewell—
Each to his separate charge, and guard the gates,
Lest rous'd to frantic agony, Peru
Burst them, and yield the fortress—
Peruv. We have vow'd—
[*Peruvian chiefs depart.*
Zam. [*falls on the altar.*] Oh thou, who view'st the heart! thou, to whom thought
Speaks without tongue; to thee is no disguise.
Therefore, accept for incense, this deep sigh;
For sacrifice, these tears wrung from the heart
And streaming on thy shrine. These now may fall
Blameless, unseen of man. Yet, not the less

Sustain me to th' accomplishment, and fill
With dauntless force, that in thy cause my soul
May triumph: and when free Peru shouts forth
The hymn of praise, rejoin my bride in heav'n!
[*Exit.*

Scene changes to Pizarro's Camp.

PIZARRO, ALVARADOS, Soldiers.

Piz. [*to Alv.*] Speed, speed, brave chief! the field may yet be ours.
Lead forth thy charge, and, as the foe ascends
Yon mound, where our brisk cannon shall confound them,
Assail them unawares—

BENALCAZAR *enters.*

Well, Benalcazar!

Ben. Candia contemns thy offer; he is gone,
With him his valiant pikemen —

Piz. Then, brave chiefs,
We shall have more to conquer. Haste, Alvarez:
Bring Zama hither —

Alv. What now thy intent
I do not look to fathom; but, beware—
'Tis loudly rumour'd thro' th'unquiet camp
That from yon fort releas'd, Almagro's son
Heads his fleet squadrons. All, with eager voice
Count and recount his force, and, as fear reckons,
Swell them at every numb'ring —

Piz. Brave Castillians!
The lion counts not when he thins the herd —
On you brave chiefs, Pizarro's glory rests:
Lead forth your separate charges.
[*Alvarados and Benalcazar go.*

ZAMA *enters.*

Zama, say,
If Cuzco saw beneath her sacred walls
A daughter of the Sun, and o'er her breast
The quivering dagger gleam, in act to strike,
Would not thy race to rescue her from death
Resign the fort, and hail with grateful shout
The foe who spar'd her life?

Zama. A crime so fell
Would draw down fire from heav'n —

Piz. Thou art the victim,
And I — [*Zama kneels.*] kneel not to me: beneath yon walls
Urge thy request. Thy race are prone to pity:
A father, and a husband will avert
The threaten'd deed —

Zama. They will not yield the fortress.
A daughter of the Sun now bows before thee,
Who ne'er has bow'd the knee to mortal man.
Grant my request—

Piz. Thy life depends on them—

Zama. Of life I have no hope: I urge no pray'r
That thou, Pizarro, may'st not justly grant.
I shall not live: nor will Zamorin long

Survive my loss : but it will sooth Villoma,
And seem like shew of solace to his tears
That they are shed upon his daughter's corse.
He is a time-worn man, bow'd by sore grief,
And ere he close my last sad rites, he too
May rest with me. He is a holy man,
And heav'n till now has smil'd upon his pray'r ;
Grant this, and if indulgent Heav'n will hear
The voice of one who for her murderer pleads,
Pangs less severe in death's dread hour shall rack
Thy struggling spirit.

A Spanish Chief *enters.*

Chief. As the gale comes on,
An intermingled noise of neighing steeds,
And troops that shout to battle, mark the advance
Of fierce Almagro's force.

JUAN *enters.*

Juan. Haste, Pizarro—
Summon Zamorin : bid him yield the fort,
Or view his Zama perish—
Piz. Speed, brave Juan,
Lead forth my chosen guard, and, if avail
Or skill or courage, yet awhile resist
Almagro's numbers.—Zama, to yon fort. [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the Fort.

ZAMORIN *and* ALMAGRO *in a watch-tower.*

Zam. Look o'er yon rising mound. Again they rally:
Again they charge the foe, and bravely combat
As men who fear not death—
Alm. No more detain me—
You sav'd my life, for you my blood shall flow:
Mine to confront the danger, yours alone
The fruits of victory.
Zam. On either wing
They hem them round, and bear down all before them.
See, from your numerous squadrons, once again
Their routed lances fly—
Alm. Another troop
Rush from the camp: the men who fled but now
Turn back on their pursuers. Steed on steed
Confus'dly clash, and mix in doubtful fight.
I will not tamely see my warriors slain:
Detain me not: this arm shall turn the battle:
This arm shall rescue Zama.
Zam. No, brave knight,
My word is pledg'd: I trust th'event to Heav'n—
But no false word shall stain Zamorin's lip—
Ah! who yon chief? [*a trumpet is heard.*
Piz. [*behind the scenes.*] Zamorin.

Zam. Hold, my heart!
'Tis he: 'tis fierce Pizarro, to these walls
Swift he advances. Aid me, Heav'n!

PIZARRO, ZAMA, Spanish Chiefs, Soldiers, *enter.*

Piz. [*entering.*] Villoma,
Zamorin, yield the fort, or now the Coya
Bleeds in your sight. Peruvians! yield the fort,
Or now the sacred daughter of the Sun
Pollutes with blood your consecrated walls.
[*Villoma, Zamorin, Almagro, Peruvian Chiefs, People, &c. rush to the lower battlements.*]
Vil. My child—my child!
Zam. Sustain me now, oh Sun!
Remember, chiefs! your vow: keep back the throng!
Piz. [*standing over Zama with his drawn dagger.*] Consent, or now she dies.
Vil. Hear! Pizarro!
Draw back the steel: the fort, the fort is thine.
Release me from my vow! [*to Zamorin.*] it is thy wife,
It is thy wife, Zamorin! hear, Peruvians!
Her blood be on your head: the Sun's pure blood!
By these grey hairs! I kneel to you, my children.
Oh spare a wretched father, spare my age.
I have but her. [*Villoma faints.*
Zam. Convey him from the walls.
Chiefs. [*to Zamorin.*] Release us from our oaths.
People. Oh horror! horror!

Come on— force back the bars. Resist us not.
[*To the Chiefs.*
Pizarro! sheath thy blade: we yield the fort.
Piz. Haste, soldiers! fix your standards on yon walls.
Zama. There is no other aid. Zamorin, turn
Thy eyes away. [*going to stab herself, is prevented by Pizarro.*] Oh feeble arm!
Piz. Peruvians,
Unbar the gates, or now the Coya dies.
Voices without.] Almagro! victory, victory, Almagro!

ORGOGNEZ *rushes in with* ALMAGRO'S *conquering army.*

Alm. Pizarro, free the Coya, or thou diest.
Piz. [*his lifted dagger in act to strike.*] Nay—if thou threaten.

BENALCAZAR *and* ALVARADOS, *brought in Prisoners and wounded.*

Benalcazar, bleeding!
Thou too, [*to Alvarados.*] disarm'd?
Alv. His forces o'ermatch'd ours.
Alm. Hear, Pizarro!
Release her, or thou diest, and these thy chiefs
Perish in lingering agonies: restore her,
And in exchange receive their ransom'd lives.
Piz. And may I trust to thee?

Alm. [*to Orgognez.*] Brave chief, release them.
Alv. [*after being released.*] Free her, or Alvarados joins Almagro.
Piz. [*sheaths his dagger, and frees Zama.*] Pizarro knows thy worth.
Alm. Descend, Zamorin,
Thy firmness has prevail'd. In friendly league,
Beneath Almagro's pow'r, bear rule o'er Cuzco.
But—if the league with Spaniards seem offence,
Almagro shall confirm Pizarro's word.
I will relieve the fort: thou, arm Peru:
The rest is Heav'n's. Now, bid the gates unclose:
Descend, and from a Spaniard's hand receive
Thy peerless bride!
[*The gates are flung open, Zamorin descends.*
Zam. Spaniard! in thee I trust.
Zama. [*They rush into each other's arms.*] Thou more than mortal!
Zama. My Zamorin!
Zam. Once more, once more on earth we shall be blest.
And thou, [*to Almagro.*] who hast redeem'd the name of Spaniard
From ever-during guilt, hear the last sound
That from Zamorin's voice shall reach thy ear,
Till in the van of battle, front to front,
Each leading on his host to death or conquest,
Our shouts immingle. Hear me praise thy virtue,
While I renounce thy friendship. We are foes.
Ye have destroy'd my country, have defac'd
A realm on whose untam'd fertility

The sun look'd kindly down, and prosperous show'rs
Pour'd forth perpetual harvests: ye have outrag'd
A people, whom content, and peace, and love,
Had bound in purest bliss, that gave to man
In this terrestrial paradise, the pledge
Of heav'n's assur'd beatitude. Oh, stranger!
This race, this realm, this paradise, your steel
And ruthless flame have wasted: I oppos'd:
Nor shall this arm, till death relax its vigour,
Fail to avenge the outrage. Can you say,
"Forgive the offence, be it no more remember'd?"
Go, gather up your host. Hence, as you came:
And when th' unfathomable deep that severs
Our hostile worlds, rolls all its strength between us:
And when our blissful brides, who ne'er have heard
The name of Spaniard, to their bosoms press
A new-born race: and new-born flow'rs and fruits
Hide every spot whereon your foot found rest,
You are forgiven. Till that day, Zamorin
Feeds in his heart just vengeance. Now—farewell.

THE END.

THE CONFESSION,

A TRAGEDY

IN

FIVE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Men.

Provost.
Prior.
Sacristan.
Steward.
Confessor.
Infirmier.
} *Monks.*

Julian, *Count of Tortona, under the name of Alfonso, performing the functions of Hospitalier to the Convent.*

Francis, *Servant of Agnes.*

Claude, *Guide.*

Peasants, Assassins.

Women.

Agnes, *Countess of Tortona.*

Ellen.

Female Attendants belonging to Agnes.

SCENE, the Convent of the Great St. Bernard, and the Rocks adjoining.

Time, that of Representation.

THE CONFESSION.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The wildest Alpine scenery of ice-mountains and precipices covered with snow, in the environs of the Great St. Bernard. The travellers are seen on different heights amid the windings of the rock, slowly descending the pass leading to the Vallais. First, Francis with two Guides exploring the way, and sounding the hollows with long poles: then Agnes by herself, preceding a litter borne by the mountain-peasants: on either side of the litter a female Attendant, followed by a Page.

AGNES.

Agnes. Oh glorious Sun! illumin'd by thy beams
These wastes of snow, these Alpine solitudes
Have pow'r to sooth me. [*advancing, and looking on different parts.*] How distinct each rock,
Smooth-brow'd, or spiring high its tapering peak!
Yon range of wavy sweep, and this that breaks
Eastward in varied forms like floating clouds!
Their hues, how changeful! these, of roseate glow,

Those, azure-dy'd : and some that climb the sky
Fling to the light their summits cop'd with gold !
Oh thou, who spak'st creation into birth,
How glorious, Lord of Nature, these thy works :
How awfully sublime !

Fran. Each step we tread
Leads to new dangers.

Guide. Sound that snow-heap'd cave.

Fran. How fearfully yon tumbling rock o'er-
hangs [*Turning back to Agnes.*
The narrow pass. Beware !

Agnes. Proceed, good Francis.

Fran. Here yawns a chasm, down whose depth,
the sight
Wanders without repose. I'll gaze no more :
Its very horror, while it shocks the sense,
Most strangely fascinates. [*He advances.*
These slippery fragments,
Hurl'd by the tempest from the crags above,
Roll loose beneath me.—Lady, let me aid you :
Lean on this faithful arm.

Agnes. My foot treads firm.
To those who know not grief such ways are painful.
I have within my soul what mocks at toil.

Fran. You were in luxury nurs'd, nor have been
us'd
To scenes like these : I, in my childhood, rock'd
In want's stern cradle feel these aged sinews,
That never shrunk in war, ache with each step
As slow I labour on. Oh, honour'd lady !
The holy brothers of St. Bernard warn'd you

Not to attempt the pass. Return, I pray.
Yet, yet amid the rocks a lingering echo
Heaves back the slow clang of the convent bell.
It is for you I fear.

Agnes. My will is fix'd.
Go with the guides, and timely warning give
If aught impede the way. The topmost snow
Stirr'd by the zephyr's breath, may swell before it
To size impassable.

Fran. I must obey.

Agnes. [*to those who bear the litter.*] Be careful,
I beseech you ; this steep path
Betrays th'unsteady foot : guard well the litter :
You shall not lack reward. Kind, gentle maids,
Be watchful of your charge. I first, myself,
Will this sharp ridge explore. So may'st thou, Ellen,
Securely pass, and ere death end thy woe
Find peace once more !

Fran. [*to the guides.*] Heard you that sound ?

Guide. Most plainly—
The voice of men advancing.

Fran. List ! again
Up as the gale comes slowly from beneath,
I hear distinct the noise of echo'd steps.

Guide. 'Tis strange in this new season ; so far well,

CLAUDE *enters.*

The rocks below are open.—Welcome, Claude :
It is the provost's guide. Thrice welcome Claude :
How fares the reverend Albert ?

Claude. Heav'n has heard
The convent pray'rs: he looks restor'd to youth:
Another man! 'Twill cheer your heart to see him.
He will be here in th'instant.—Hark, they come.
I haste to warn the convent. Fare you well.

Guide. Oh happy hour! Heav'n guard his sacred life.

Claude. [*going, speaks to Agnes.*] Lady! I pray you let the litter rest:
And in this cave, that fronts the mid-day sun,
Wait till the train pass by. This narrow ridge
Will else your lives endanger. [*Claude goes.*

Agnes. [*to her train.*] Repose awhile, my friends! and in this cave
Set down the litter. Your good Provost comes—
Not these bleak rocks alone, and the Alpine swains
Echo his praises: far and wide his virtues
Call forth the general blessing on his head.

The PROVOST *and his train enter: as the Provost passes, Agnes speaks.*

Your benediction, father!

Pro. Peace be with you!
Those widow's weeds, this melancholy train:—
Daughter, you seem in woe, and pale your cheek
Thro' sorrow more than years: what urgent cause
Compells you to these mountains?

Agnes. Holy father!
I pray you pardon me, nor deem me one
Rude or untouch'd by kindness, that I leave you,

My tale of grief untold.—These sable weeds
But ill express the anguish of my soul.
But seek not out the cause. The pow'r who tries
The mourner, smites in mercy. Thou hast blest me:
Farewell—

Pro. Yet, mark me, daughter, no vain wish
To hear what may in utterance grieve thy spirit,
And ill may suit my years: but sacred duties
By heav'n enjoin'd, and sympathy of nature
That bids an old man, vers'd himself in woe,
Feel for the grief of others, prompt my speech.—

Agnes. When thou dost pray for those who grieve on earth,
Remember me.

Pro. Yet there are lenient words,
Balm of the soul. Daughter, my way of life
Has been where sinners wept, where sorrow sigh'd,
And anguish groan'd around me: and I know
How willingly the mourner, bow'd with woe,
Broods o'er the secret pang that life consumes.
This must not be: heav'n link'd us heart to heart
To heighten every pleasure, and by sharing
Lessen the load of misery.—Silent still?
Turn not away regardless.

Agnes. No, good father;
Each word thou speak'st is treasur'd in my soul.
Would I might freely at thy feet pour forth
What weighs upon my heart. I am not one
Infirm of mind who fondly broods o'er woe.
These tears, that will not be suppress, gush out
Not for myself alone. One farewell pray'r.

Trust me, the burden of my grief is lighten'd :
For thou hast pitied me.
Pro. In silence mourn,
I will not urge thee more. Heav'n sooth thy soul !
But I conjure thee, if thou value life
Turn to our hospitable roof again :
There wait till fitter season may ensure
Thy safe departure. Duty forc'd my step
Now in this hazardous time : not far the roof
That shelters me : but long thy way, and perils
No arm of man can ward, surround the path
Where-ere thou goest. And these lone rocks at times
Are crost by ruthless robbers.
Agnes. I must on.
Pro. No roof, no shelter near, nor safe return,
If the dim night-fall steal on thee unwares.
And oft the sun in these unsteady skies
Sinks, ere its close, in tempest.
Agnes. I must on.
[*Pointing to the litter.*] Here lies a hapless woman,
one who wastes
Hourly away, worn out with ceaseless woe :
An uncomplaining sufferer, nigh to death :
A native of yon vale ; her only wish
Is yet once more to view the peaceful spot
To childhood dear, and there to find her grave
Amid her kin. Farewell.
Pro. May heav'n protect thee ! [*Exeunt omnes.*

Scene the second, the Convent Cloisters.

PRIOR *and* CONFESSOR.

Prior. Say, hast thou found Alfonso?
Con. No, good Prior.
He mus'd not in his cell, nor duely came
To join th' assembled monks,
Ere the fixt duties of the convent call'd
Each to his separate office.
Prior. 'Tis most strange.
Con. I have made careful search, and closely question'd
The brethren, one by one.
Prior. Who last beheld him?
Con. Juan. At dawn while he unbarr'd the gates,
Alfonso darted forth
Striking his breast in anguish.
Prior. Heav'n protect him!
Sooth, all ye sainted host, his woe-worn soul!
Con. Alas! my mind misgives me.
Prior. How?
Con. I fear
We ne'er shall see him more. Unhappy man!
Our holy Provost to these walls returns
To fix anew our duties. Much methinks
He dreads the issue of that solemn inquest,
Which here confirms him in his perilous charge,
His only solace: or for ever drives him
From this lone roof. To him he must reveal

The anguish of his spirit. Hapless man!
Fain had he died unknown!
Prior. Hear, holy Saint!
Thou, who didst found 'mid everlasting snows
These walls, thy earthly residence, look down!
Look down on him whose unremitted zeal
At life's dread risk, has highly minister'd
To thy most blest intent!—Hear, holy Bernard,
Nor to the storm and conflict of dark passion,
Abandon poor Alfonso!
Con. Yes, my brother,
Service like his, nor wealth, nor worldly honours
Gain or repay: its source is in the heart;
And in the spirit that there prompts to act,
Finds its sole recompense.
Prior. If fervent pray'rs,
If tears of gratitude by others shed,
The pilgrim and lone stranger, at life's hazard,
By brave Alfonso rescu'd from destruction,
Could heal the wound that bleeds with inward pangs
Peace on his soul had shed her lenient balm:
But 'tis not so with him.
Con. No—many a time
When the lost travellers, whom his arm from far
Bore 'mid the howling night-storm, whom his hand
Long chaf'd before the hearth, with grateful look
First turn'd th' awaken'd eye on poor Alfonso,
Who hung all pity o'er the seeming corse:
How have I seen him from his dark cheek dash
The tear away, and fly the open'd lip
That pour'd its blessing on him.

STEWARD *enters with* Laymen *bearing logs, &c.*

Stew. Haste, my friends,
Rake up the embers, pile the glowing hearth
With unctuous pine,
The sight shall cheer him, and the crackling blaze
Breathe grateful fragrance round. Then, deck the board,
And freely cull what best may furnish out
Our frugal banquet. [*Exeunt Laymen.*

Con. Whence this sudden haste?

Stew. Ring out the convent bell, that the loud peal
Recal each absent brother. None must fail
Of their accustom'd duty.

Prior. Stay, good Steward.

Stew. The Provost is expected, and each moment
We look to greet him.

Prior. All good angels guide him!
But say who brought
The welcome news? for scarce the lower rocks
Peep thro' the snow: and, save some pilgrim bound
On fearful penance, and that mournful train
Who left at morn the convent, none have dar'd
The dangerous pass.

Stew. You know the southern guide.

Prior. What, faithful Claude? He, who for many a season
Has claim'd the convent prize, his custom'd due
Who from the pass first clears the drifted snows?

Stew. The same. He left our long-expected Provost

Now as he slowly up the mountain toil'd.
Farewell; my charge awaits me. [*Exit.*
Prior. Peace be with you!
Alas, no common call, in this rude season,
Has forc'd good Albert, bow'd with weight of years,
To leave the shelter of the peaceful vale.
'Tis not alone to fix our separate charge;
Mandates from Rome, strictly to scrutinize
Each layman and poor hind that serves the convent,
(For rumour dwells on bad men harbour'd here)
Now urge his step.
Con. Full well we know his mission
That shames this sacred roof. Alas! that slander
Should feign, that here the ruffian and fell murderer
Unquestion'd guests, have found familiar shelter.
Such haunt not here. Sad years of ceaseless wars
That long have wasted fair Italia's plain,
Turning to barrenness her fruitful soil,
Have steel'd men's hearts; and, haply, from the camp,
Outcasts, who prowl when late the battle bled,
And pluck'd, 'tis said, while the warm blood yet flows
The covering from the wound, at times have sought
Night shelter from the storm. Else, never here
Have lawless men found refuge.
Prior. Go, my brother,
Ere Albert yet arrives, search out once more
Alfonso's lonely haunt. Heav'n guide thy steps!
[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Convent Hall.

PROVOST, PRIOR, CONFESSOR, *other* Brethren, *and* Laymen.

Pro. [*to the Laymen.*] Brothers! no charge of murder rests on them.
Depart in peace, my friends! Heav'n's blessing on you!
Would that the princes of the world, and those
That sigh on golden beds, could lay, like you,
Hands innocent of ill, on guiltless hearts,
And taste such sleep as yours! depart in peace!

SACRISTAN *enters.*

Sac. Alfonso is return'd—yet—hapless man!
Pro. Why stands he not, as duty bids, before us?
Sac. Oh he is loth to come.
Pro. This is most strange.
Sac. I found him, in the cemetery, lone,
'Mid many a stranger corse, unsepulchred,
Still-gazing on that pilgrim, lately found
When slipt the snow-heap from the southern ridge.
His face was yet unchang'd and calm each feature
As when he rested on the snow, while death

Stole on his sleep. So calm, Alfonso look't,
Such too his smile: each seem'd the other's image:
Scarce could I tell who of the twain had life,
Or who had ceas'd to breathe. Pardon me, father,
Long-time I fear'd to break that solemn trance,
And when at last I rous'd him,

Con. [*interrupting him.*] 'Twas not kind
To rouse him, brother. Well I know his nature,
You should have spar'd him yet a little while,
'Tis long since holy peace has still'd his spirit:
That time his soul had converse with its maker.

Pro. But when at last you urg'd him—

Sac. At the word
At once the trance dissolv'd—he started up,
And frowning darkly on me, bad me say
That never earthly ear should hear his grief,
If thou reject his pray'r, to wear out life
Here, amid perilous labours—thus he left me,
And onward 'mid the mountains swiftly rush'd,
Regardless of my answer.

Prior. Holy father!
Send forth the Confessor: with him alone
He communes willingly: but shuns us ever,
Save when a sufferer common aid demands.

Con. Yes, I have sooth'd his melancholy soul,
And won at times to half-form'd confidence,
By tales of woe which breath'd to tranquil minds
Had rack'd the soul with horror: still to these
He gives most heedful ear.

Pro. Go, sooth, persuade him.

[*To the Confessor, who departs.*

It must be strange unexpiated guilt
Harrows his soul: and was it right, good Prior,
To give him charge among you?
Prior. He deserv'd it.
Such thoughts as trouble you, at first came o'er us,
When with wan look distraught, and wild attire,
He call'd at midnight, when no foot beside
Long time had scal'd the snows. Our wary eye
Watch'd o'er him. Stern his brow, and strange his mood,
Yet at our call most zealous: so months past,
He still the same. When patient Anselm died,
(Heav'n rest his soul! he fell in manhood's prime,
Worn out with toil) Alfonso, now long-tried,
Here vow'd to pass his dedicated days
A cloister'd menial, and with earnest pray'r
Besought his perilous office. Look on us:
Age and infirmity here bow before you.
Point out the man whose limbs could stand that charge.
Pro. None—none; I blame you not. But say, good Prior,
How doth he exercise his charge?
Prior. With zeal
Passing belief. His labour shames our service:
For still in boist'rous months, when all within
Shake at the tempest's roar, and icy blast,
Singly he ventures forth, his dog sole guide,
At starless midnight, or when drifted heaps
Have hid the pass: nor seeks again the roof,
(Tho' numbness steal on his o'erwearied limbs)

Till he has sounded each snow-cover'd cave,
And long and loudly call'd, if heard from far
Shrieks of the lost night-wanderer strike his ear.
So pass his days away.

CLAUDE *enters.*

Oh holy fathers!
Pro. Claude, what brings thee hither?
Claude. Help, speedy help! or she for whom I beg
Will not long need your succour. [*to the Infirmier.*]
Good, good father,
This is thy office. Yes, we know thee well,
We who frequent these mountains.
Pro. Take thy cordials:
Rare medicines: and this strongly scented oil.
Its essence once inhaled, thro' closed lips
Will call the spirit back!
Inf. Where are the sufferers?
And what their numbers?
Claude. 'Tis but one poor soul,—
A delicate tender creature: one of those
That left at noon your roof. She would away:
Though at that time, methought, a deadly paleness
Was settled in her face.—Oh how it griev'd me!
Inf. But where, where are they?
Claude. They had past the storm-house
Where, every day, at noon, and fall of night,
Ye kindly leave, for those who chance may need,
A dole of bread and wine: this, they had past

A little space, when they who bore the litter
In which she lay, slipp'd on the melted ice:
And much I fear the fall has quite o'erpow'r'd her.
I never thought that thing of such slight frame
Could heave so deep a groan. And so I help'd them
To bear her to the shed, then hurried hither
To claim your aid.

Inf. Come, honest Claude. — Fáre-well! [*to the Monks.*]

Pro. Heav'n guide, and prosperous issue crown your labour!

Say, was she of that train whom late I greeted
Where rushing from the mountain snows, the flood
Ceaselessly roars?

Prior. No other foot but theirs
Has dared the pass.

Pro. In vain I urg'd them back.
Know you their names?

Pri. They wish'd to be conceal'd.
Some secret cause of grief ('twas whisper'd so)
Unmeet to be divulg'd to common ears,
Silenc'd enquiry. Yet a prattling page
Who loiter'd o'er the hearth, said that his lady,
The dark-stol'd dame, was Countess of Tortona:
And he did hint of a poor peasant girl
Tales of strange import—but we sought not out
What misery wish'd conceal'd.

Pro. The noon-bell strikes.
Come, holy duties call our thoughts to heav'n—
Here meet again. Alfonso must be question'd.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the Storm-house, on one side of the rocky pass, amid the Mountains

AGNES, ELLEN *in a litter sleeping, Attendants,* Blanche *and* Laura.

Agnes. So—gently bring her to the open air.
A soothing sleep steals o'er her : soft she breathes.
How sweet her tranquil look ! and lo, that smile :
As if an angel touch'd with earthly woe
Look'd down upon her slumber.
Blan. Such art thou
In mortal semblance.
Agnes. [*looking on her.*] Sleep, poor hapless Ellen!
Three painful years are pass'd, since I have watch'd thee,
And laid thy stranger brow upon my breast.
I have assuag'd thy bitterness of grief,
Sooth'd the wild dreams of a distracted mind,
And led thee to the view of opening heav'n,
Where tears are turn'd to gladness : but such sleep
Till now has ne'er been thine.

FRANCIS *enters.*

Francis ! Oh say,
Will they proceed ?
Fran. No golden bribe will tempt.
I have explor'd the further tract.
Agnes. Well, Francis !

Fran. It is impassable.
Agnes. Oh say not so.
I will myself explore it.
Fran. None can pass.
The rock more rugged far: and that bright sun
Which cheer'd at dawn of day, its noon now past,
Has turn'd to foaming streams the melted snow.
Agnes. Yet, if the convent send sufficient aid,
Still, still we may proceed.
Fran. E're I turn'd back
Reluctantly, (I know thy stedfast mind,)
Prone from a crag that overhung the road
A snow mount thunder'd down, and barr'd all progress.
Some from the convent soon will join our guides,
And warrant safe return; and, pardon lady!
I have long serv'd you.
Agnes. Say whate'er thou wilt.
Thy lord esteem'd thee highly.
Fran. Aye, these arms
Oft fondled him in childhood.
Agnes. By his side
Thou hast in battle stood, when many a warrior
Fled from the field. The man whom Julian honor'd
I hold my friend. Say on, nor fear offence.
Fran. Would I had died in battle at his feet,
E're liv'd till now: e're seen what now I see,
The Countess of Tortona like a slave,
Tending a peasant girl: one too, who lur'd,
Aye, and by witching wiles;—
Agnes. [*interrupting him.*] No, not thy virtues,

Nor privilege of years, nor length of service,
Zeal for my house and honour shall avail,
If ere thy rash unhallow'd breath shall whisper
Disgrace on her. Rather aloud revile
The memory of him whom most I honour;
The man, who but for this, had proudly stood
'Mid men unrivall'd: if thou deem it base
To serve my will because I sooth her woe,
Such service I disclaim—gold thou shalt have,
But never look to see my face again.
Thou art in tears: nay, rise.

Fran. Not look on me!
And give me gold! I am indeed most vile.
I never felt what service was till now.
If you do wish my death, bid me begone.
I rashly spoke what zeal for you inspir'd.
She was not the seducer.

Agnes. Peace, good Francis!
You touch a string that vibrates on my heart.
Still calm her sleep? [*To the Attendants.*

Blan. Most tranquil.

Agnes. Such repose
I fear bodes nought but evil. From the convent
None yet arrive. 'Tis vain without their aid
To move her hence.

Fran. They will be here, ere long.
The guide, whose ready zeal so won our hearts,
Was fresh, and nimble footed.

Agnes. Go, my friend!
Yon height commands afar the winding path:
Look, if you see aught hastening. [*He goes.*

Julian! Julian!
Thy word enjoin'd not this: but not till death
Has still'd that woe-worn frame, will I forsake her.
But thou!
Oh art thou with the living! or with those
That grieve no more? what earthly voice can speak!
Since that dread hour (oh! let me not recal it!)
My search how vain! and save that fatal scroll
Which bad me raise thy tomb, and deem thee dead,
Gave me thy worldly wealth, and loos'd the tie
That binds eternally my soul to thine,
Of thee I nought have heard. Wert thou on earth,
This now had been thy office. No. I wrong thee.
He who sustains my soul, and bids me, here,
Shelter in life's last agonies the orphan,
And her that has no helper, had once more
Made one our wedded hearts.

FRANCIS, *the* INFIRMIER, CLAUDE, Guide, Laymen, *enter*.

Fran. [*to the Infirmier.*] Haste! holy father.
Inf. Where is the sufferer?
Agnes. Here, in still repose.
Inf. Has she long slumber'd thus?
Agnes. An hour, or more.
Inf. Rouse, rouse her quickly. Chafe her temples, lady!
Here, hold this pungent spirit. [*Ellen sighs.*
Agnes. Oh that sigh!
Inf. You of the southern climes, you haply know not,

Amid these chilling snows when sleep steals on,
How fatally it ends! the blood too rests,
And every vital part forgets its function.
Sleep here is but the harbinger of death.
Agnes. The harbinger of death! oh rouse her not:
Sir, she is broken-hearted.
Inf. I must do
What duty bids, and with unwearied zeal
Apply all earthly means to bring back life.
The rest is Heav'n's.
Agnes. [*to the Servants*] She wakes—stand, stand apart!
How is it with you, Ellen?
Ellen. Well—quite well—
Free from all pain.
Agnes. Your cheek, methinks, is ting'd
With a faint flush like renovated health,
But weak, most weak your voice. Why do you gaze
So earnestly around? these are your friends,
Those of my household whom you ever lov'd,
Blanche, and kind-hearted Laura: this good man,
One of the convent brethren.
Ellen. I scarce knew
Whether I liv'd or not. I've been in heav'n:
You too were there: indeed I ever thought you
Too good for this vile world.
Agnes. Compose thyself.
Ellen. I am most calm.
Agnes. Oh hush.
Ellen. I am not wandering.
But most distinctly as I now behold you,

I saw you there. [*pointing up*] And I, poor Ellen, help'd
To place a crown of glory on your brow.
And there came one—I dare not, Saint on earth!
Before your honour'd presence breathe his name.
He, in this world, has had his doom of woe.
Oh say that you forgive me—ne'er, till now,
While my poor mind was mine—

Inf. This must not be.
Daughter! be still! speak to her, tender lady!
Speak, if thy gushing tears permit the utterance.

Agnes. Sweet Ellen! clasp my hand.

Ellen. Thou more than parent!
Had not thine eye met mine, when first I woke,
I had not thank'd this charitable man
For forcing life upon me. Oh! I faint.

Agnes. Here, on my bosom rest.

Ellen. Thou art most kind.
Yes, I shall soon have rest; eternal rest,
And thou thy heavenly crown. [*Swoons.*

Inf. Here—bear her up.

Agnes. Oh gently with her.

Inf. Good St. Bernard, aid us! [*Exeunt.*

Scene, a Lake on the South side of the Convent surrounded with Mountains covered with snow. Alfonso pacing restlessly to and fro.

ALFONSO.

Alf. Ye mountains! on whose heights when first ye tow'r'd,
Coeval winter stood! hoar cliffs! where Time
From the first stretch and waving of his wing,
Shed everlasting snows! oh hear my voice,
Fall on my brow! and thou, on which I tread,
Immoveable rock! rive thy deep base beneath me,
Nor give me back, till at th' appointed hour
I, and each secret sinner upon earth
Stand up, and hear the doom that shall not change.
It will not be conceal'd! they shall hear all:
Or I once more on that loath'd world beneath,
Must stand all lonely 'mid the moving press
Like one, on whom the blue plague, as it past,
Shed visible taint.

Confessor without. Alfonso!

Alf. Ha!

CONFESSOR *enters.*

Con. Alfonso—
'Tis he. I long have sought thee—louldly call'd—
And thrice the convent bell has warn'd thee back.

Alf. It 'scap'd me not unheard.

Conf. The Provost sent me—

Alf. Consents he to my wishes?
Con. Trust his kindness.
Alf. He comes to search my soul.
Con. Not your's alone.
Each layman, every hind that serves the convent,
Have render'd strict account.
Alf. Pure sinless souls!
Why wound their spirit with unfounded questions?
They have not shed man's blood.
Con. 'Tis true, they urg'd th'enquiry.
Alf. And ere now
Each to his day-task hies with lighten'd heart,
Merrily trolling forth his mountain song:
Each with the good man's blessing on his head.
Con. So shall thy soul find peace.
Alf. Oh never—never.
Con Thou dost not know his kindness, but thy deeds
Are known to him—
Alf. [*troubled.*] What deeds?
Con. All, all, whate'er
Zeal and unwearied toil, and dauntless courage
Have wrought at life's dread risque.
Alf. Would I had perish'd
In rescuing others!
Con. Why thus dread the Provost?
To him reveal thy grief:
He is not, as some are who wear our garb,
Of soul austere. Virtue in him beams forth
With seraph mercy: and his way of life
'Mid scenes of misery, but in closer bonds

Links him with those that suffer. And hoar age,
That draws his spirit nearer to his God,
Looks kindly back on those who toil below.
If thou hast sinn'd, in him the penitent sinner
Beholds a father—

Alf. But I have not shed
The tear of penitence. Who probes my soul,
Must loath the thing I am. I shall pour forth
To his astonish'd and incredulous ear,
Guilt that shall shock his soul, while tears gush forth
In pity of man's weakness.

Con. Calm thy spirit—

Alf. [*highly agitated.*] These rocks have heard it; and the night-storm borne
On his dark wing, 'mid cliffs, and hollow caves
My echoed groans; and I have quak'd to hear,
Sounds as of men, accomplices in guilt,
Muttering their tales of murder.

Con. Sooth him, Heav'n!
Be calm, Alfonso; these wild bursts of passion
Will but arouse suspicion.—Why thus grasp me?

Alf. Suspicion! Who beheld me? Where th' accuser?
Come to the Provost.

Con. Not till thou art calm.
None shall behold thee thus, so strangely mov'd.
I oft have still'd thy grief.

Alf. Thou art most kind.

Con. Look round; this scene shall sooth thee:
Long years may pass, ere in these storm tost heights,

A sky so clear, air of such temperate breath,
And sun with scarce a cloud to veil his glory
May visit us again.

Alf. Oh holy comforter!
Scenes such as these have rais'd my voice in pray'r,
'Mid solitudes where none on earth could hear.
Oh that the innocent joys of days long past
Might steal me from myself, like lenient dreams
Of friends that are no more.

Con. Nay, inly brood not.
Look on yon azure sky, and call on Heav'n.—
Oh hang not o'er that lake which stilly sleeps:
Its hue is dark and dreary; tho' it spread
A polished mirror to the rocks around.
Why dost thou gaze so fixedly upon it?

Alf. Look where the shape of yon o'erhanging crag
That thwarts the sun, lies shadow'd on the lake,
How suddenly th' gathering ice shoots on,
Chilling the wave beneath.
E'en so it fares with me—the winter, here,
[*Striking his breast.*
Turns every object that the eye doth glance on,
To its own cheerless nature.
[*Starts back from the lake in the utmost agitation.*]
Heav'n and earth!
Saw, saw you it?

Con. Whence that wild look of horror?
Why start away?

Alf. [*looking round.*] Where did the spectre vanish?

Con. What spectre? I beheld none.

Alf. That—that form
Which scowl'd upon me, there—[*pointing to the lake.*] not earthly, sure?
Oh never yet did flesh and blood assume
Such ghastly semblance: never living eye
So look'd.
Con. Oh merciful Heav'n!
Alf. I do conjure you,
Oh tell me—am I then that ghastly form?
Was it myself? was there none other here?
Con. It was thy shadow'd form.
Alf. [*vehemently*] Come to the Provost.
What need of vain confession? guilt is on me:
Deep graven by the visible hand of heav'n,
Like his that bore upon his brow the blood
Of the first slain. Come to the Provost, haste!
[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Hall of the Convent. Monks in Council.

PROVOST, PRIOR, INFIRMIER, STEWARD.

Prior. I hear their steps.
Alf. [*without.*] That, that, or nought on earth
Shall force it force me—
Prior. Hark! it is his voice.
We pray thee, kindly question him.

ALFONSO *and* CONFESSOR *enter.*

Pro. Alfonso,
I come not arm'd with harsh authority
To wound th'afflicted soul: not mine the office
From the reluctant bosom, ere the time,
To pluck th' unripe confession: rather mine
To praise thy deeds, and here, before the brethren
Proclaim thy high desert.
Alf. It is the motive
Alone that sanctions all. I claim no praise.
Pro. Bow not beneath despair. Whate'e, thy crime,
Know that, unceasing at the gates of mercy,
A beckoning spirit calls aloud to earth,
"Thou, who hast sinn'd, repent, and sin no more:
"Kneel here, and enter in."

Alf. Yes, I have sinn'd—

Pro. So have we all.

Alf. But mine are deadly sins.

Pro. Great is heaven's mercy; and our holy church
Has pray'rs and pennances of pow'r to cleanse
The soul from all pollution.

Alf. Not from mine.
Penance to me! who, watchful of the sound,
Heard the night tempest call, and walk'd abroad
When nought but heaven's avenging ministers
The lightning and wing'd whirlwind mov'd on earth!
Talk not to me of pennance.

Pro. Art thou one
Who once knew better days: one, whom fair fortune
Allur'd to summer seas, then left at once
A lonely wreck?

Alf. I have known better days.
No other terms shall force the secret from me.
[*to himself.*

Pro. Discourse not with thyself; to me give answer.
Hast thou by stern necessity compell'd,
To deeds against thy nature, link'd with men
Of lawless life, and stain'd thy soul with blood,
To silence the accuser?

Prior. Holy Provost!
We we will answer this: no stain of blood
Rests on Alfonso.

Alf. Answer'st thou for me?

Ye know me not, nor e'er shall hear my crime,
Till thou hast promis'd, nay by oath confirm'd,
That whatsoe'er the guilt which I reveal,
Thou will't not drive me hence. Thus far be known:
That of such deeds as now you question me,
Wealth gain'd by force, and cool deliberate murder
To silence the accuser, I am guiltless.
Grant this, or I am mute.

Pro. Hear, man of guilt!
And when I speak with Heav'n's authority:
Bow to the dust.

Alf. Deep guilt doth weigh me down.
But I'll not speak: nor shall ye force me hence.
Look here: behold this scar; no battle wound,
Tho' I have bled in war. This impious hand
Struck at my life: and, if ye force me hence,
Think on his guilt, the slayer of himself!—
Beware! beware! ye know not what it is:—
But I have fought the demon of despair,
And sunk beneath the strife.

Pro. Sinner, I come
Such as thyself, the heir of frailty,
Shackled and gall'd with man's infirmities,
To weep with thee, to bend my knee with thine,
Teach thee, like me, to raise thy hands in pray'r,
And meekly shed the penitential tear
That drops down healing. Speak to me, my son!
He, who conjures thee, spreads a father's arms
To fold thee to his bosom.

Alf. Kind, kind man!
Thou shalt hear all: I will obey thy voice,

But—oh—in pity—force me not, I pray thee,
To that strange world below: here let me labour
What yet remains of life: not long the term.
Vigils and painful service soon must end me:
Look on this wasted frame.

Pro. Here rest in peace!
If peace here visit thee.

Alf. [*kneels to him.*] Thanks, gracious father!

Pro. Disclose thy name, thy rank, what urg'd thee hither,
And what mysterious motive here enchains thee
To such dread hazards, that the oath-bound monk
Shrinks from the toil.

Alf. All shall be fully told.
Julian my name. Wealth and fair heritage
Of lands and castled towns, amid the Peers
Of ducal Milan, rank'd me first in pow'r:
My palace tow'r'd on proud Tortona's brow,
And I—its lord.

Prior. Thou—thou, Tortona's Count!
'Twas but this morn—

Alf. [*interrupting him.*] Nay—if you disbelieve,
You'll hear strange things.

Pro. [*to the Prior.*] Be silent—one rash word
May all confuse.

Alf. About my twentieth year,
Ten years now past; [*gradually becomes more and more confused.*] nay—wonder not. These locks
Once dark as jet, on sudden chang'd to grey,
That night I stabb'd myself: and, whence this cheek

With more than time's deep traces sadly furrow'd,
Your haunts can witness. At my twentieth year—
Till then, each wish indulg'd, that Fancy form'd.
Oh had I, ere that time, by Heav'n's kind chast'ning,
But tasted at the brim, but sipp'd one drop
Of that sad cup whose bitter dregs I drain,
Haply I had not been the man I am!
Virtue had charms for me. No—no. It sprung not
From Heav'n's eternal root: 'twas the frail flow'r
That gaily blossoms in life's sunshine day.
I pray your pardon.—
Where left I off?

Pro. You said your twentieth year.

Alf. That was the time, when brave Novara's lord,
Stricken by age, but still in heart a warrior,
Proclaim'd a tournament: his daughter's hand
The envied prize: if he who gain'd the field
Made oath, when wedded, at his own free charge
To arm five hundred knights, all cas'd in steel,
In right of Sforza's heir, from Milan's throne
Driven by ambitious France.

Pro. We know those wars.

Alf. I went, I won the prize; a beauteous bride,
One whose rare mind, high-character'd, o'erpast
All that the eye-presag'd of inward worth.
Ill fated Agnes! breath'd a man on earth
Who slightingly had nam'd thee, on his head
My sword had thy pre-eminence maintain'd,
Peerless above thy sex. Yet—her I left—
Not then—not then. Five years first glided on,
Five peaceful years—and—happiness was—her's.

Then came the wars, and all the accidents
Of doubtful conflict. With our forces march'd
The Banneret that led the hardy Swiss:
One for his skill in arms call'd from his flock:
A swain, but proud of soul.
What needs his name? that time I sav'd his life,
And he too rescued mine—him—him—I murder'd.
Pro. Oh heav'n!
Him who had sav'd thy life! what demon urg'd thee?
Alf. [*highly agitated.*] Here, here the peasant
smote me. The wide world
Has rung with my disgrace—a soldier's blood
Boils in these veins: but seek not out the cause.
He should have plung'd his dagger in my heart,
As mine was sheath'd in his: deep in the heart.
That had been noble vengeance—but—a blow!
Pro. Vengeance! for what?
Alf. His sister—oh! his sister!
Oh, miserable Ellen!—
Her, her I wedded.
Pro. You said Novara's daughter was your wife.
Alf. [*much agitated.*] Yet, yet I wedded Ellen—
didst thou think
One of such purity, not angels purer,
Had deign'd to meet my love, save that she deem'd
A husband's rightful arms were linkt in hers.
Pro. But where is Ellen?
Alf. Ha!
Pro. Tortona's Countess
Erewhile—
Alf. [*half frantic*] Where, where is Ellen?

Would that I saw that angel stretch'd before me
In any form of death: her pale cheek cold;
And the mild languor of her azure eye
Fixt as I gaz'd upon it! would to heav'n
That on your barbarous rocks I found her corse,
Transfixt with light'ning! so she were but dead.
Then, ere th' avenger call'd, I should once more
Know what it is to weep. Oh! Ellen, Ellen!
[*He weeps.*

Pro. His tears gush forth. May it relieve his anguish!

Prior. Oh! cease to torture him.

Pro. He looks more calm.
Each tear, that trickles down his cheek, allays
His troubled spirit.

Alf. Yet—a little while,
Kind men! I will be brief—ye must not leave me,
It weighs less heavy here.

Pro. Another time!

Alf. Heav'n may not grant again an hour like this.
In the last battle at Novara's siege,
When Tremouille and Trevulci led the foe,
And, from their steeds dismounted, Gaul's brave knights
Stood with portended spears, in firm array
Immoveable. When fear had seiz'd our host,
The Banneret and I, in arms sworn brothers,
Rush'd emulous on, and in our breasts receiv'd
Th' opposing points. Our men, the opening made,
Follow'd and conquer'd. As we bleeding lay,
" Be thou, (he said) a brother to an orphan,

"Who has but me." I vow'd, and swoon'd upon him.
When next I woke, 'twas in Novara's walls:
Of him no more was known.

Pro. You said you slew him.

Alf. You shall hear all.

The Duke restor'd, when war had ceas'd to rage,
My name and rank disguis'd, I went as one
Dear to her brother: and within a dell,
Lock'd in by heights which scarce the neighb'ring swain
Cross'd with his flock at summer, found the orphan.
Oh! at the sight of her, the pea ant girl,
My soul at once discover'd why I sigh'd,
Clasp'd in Novara's arms. Spare the recital.
I wooed, I won, and wedded her.

Pro. How! wedded!

Alf. I wedded Ellen, aye, and time flew by
In bliss not earthly, while remembrance slept:
But when the fiend was rous'd, fang'd scorpions swung me.
At times, false cause pretended, I withdrew,
Short absence, to Tortona: there the smile
That ever met me,
Arm'd with new sting the viper at my heart.
I had less keenly suffer'd, had reproof
Scowl'd at my entrance; it was never so.
But oh! the curse! while Agnes clasp'd my neck
My thought was of another! on a day,
When annual feast and revels rous'd Tortona,
In honour of our nuptials: as the pomp
Mov'd on, the Countess radiant at my side,

Forth rush'd the Banneret; yet, yet, I hear him.
" Traitor! receive from him who sav'd thy life
" Fit meed for guilt like thine:" he spoke and struck me,
Struck me, Novara's daughter by my side.
Then my swift steel—

Pro. I thought—

Alf. [*interrupting him.*] 'Twas there he fell,
But died in Ellen's arms: and his last breath
Bound her to break the tie that link'd her soul
To perjury and murder. I return'd:
At sight of me, for still our hearts were one,
Her woe to frenzy rose. That time this hand
Aim'd at my life: heav'n will'd not so my death:
Tho' rumour widely spread it.

Pro. At our hearth
We too have heard, confusedly told, thy death:
And the hous'd pilgrim still describes the tomb
Rais'd by thy Countess; where each day and night,
All hours, unwearied orisons call down
Heav'n's mercy on thy soul.

Alf. The loud report
Had struck on Ellen's ear: for now she knew
Her base seducer.

Pro. How!

Alf. The Banneret
(Escap'd from chains,) returning to his home,
Found on her neck my picture; but no voice
Ere told, till now, that I, Tortona's lord,
Garb'd like a peasant of the northern Alps,
Watch'd at craz'd Ellen's side, where'er she stray'd,

Begg'd from poor hinds, and forc'd, where pray'rs
avail'd not,
The scanty meal that fed her. None e'er told
That oft, to sooth her woe, o'er unknown rocks
I toil'd, and smooth'd her way to Milan's vale:
And clasp'd her in these arms when on my tomb
She sunk in tearless swoon. 'Twas never known
When months had thus gone by, and lenient time
Had still'd her groans: that while with heav'n-
rais'd eye,
She breath'd my name, and kiss'd my pictur'd sem-
blance,
That I forgetful, gaz'd too fondly on her,
And all the truth flash'd forth.
Pro. I dread th' event.
Alf. She started from my arms, while tears,
methought,
Gush'd down her glowing cheek.
Then turning suddenly to one I saw not,
" Be thou obey'd! (she cried) and, thus address'd
me.
" Kneel on this tomb, and swear by him in heav'n,
" Thou ne'er wilt trace my wanderings, ne'er en-
" quire
" If weal or woe betide: ne'er look on Ellen
" Till dead, or dying— swear, that so my blessing
" May rest on thee hereafter." I obey'd,
Nor ever saw her more. Where is she now?
Is the deep slumber of the dead upon her? [*frantic.*]
Weeps she, or raves, lone, reft of every friend?
Hark! hark! on me she calls—I come.

Pro. Restrain him.
Oh hold his struggling limbs. Soothe, soothe him heav'n!

Alf. [*after violently struggling, breaks from them.*]
Ye shall not hold me here, unseen of men:
No, I will stalk commission'd o'er the world
Like Heav'n's enquiring spirit. Guilt shall shake
At my approach, and youth turn grey before me.
Look, when I view the boy in lustihood
Of health and beauty, as he reels along
To the deluded virgin, in his grasp
I will infix this dagger. At my bidding
The breast, that glow'd beneath his touch, shall bleed.
She too, shall deem the blow. Oh! Ellen! answer.—
Far kinder than the kiss that fir'd her soul.
There end her woes: and while she rests in peace
His eye may look on heav'n: mine never more.
[*bursts away.*

Pro. Haste, haste! restrain him! bring him back, my brothers!

END OF ACT THE THIRD.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A Cave amidst the Mountains.

Two Assassins *disguised like the native Mountaineers.*

1 *Assas.* The time is past: they promis'd quick return.
This steel lacks blood.
2 *Assas.* Our booty shall not fail. Be patient, brother.
1 *Assas.* Why did you lure us from the southern plains?
There still, if plunder fail'd, earth's grassy bed
Refresh'd our weary limbs, and the blue sky
Look'd kindly on our slumber. Here—
2 *Assas.* Be patient—
Our long expected prize, Tortona's wealth,
Ere long shall far o'erpay these transient toils.
1 *Assas.* Aye, if we seize the Countess.
2 *Assas.* If we seize her!
How can she 'scape?
1 *Assas.* The pass below is open,
Secure from danger, by the Provost's guides
Clear'd from the snows.
2 *Assas.* No, not if trusty Gualter
Has faithfully obey'd me.

Gualter *and a Third* Assassin *enter.*

1 *Assas.* See, he comes.
2 *Assas.* Well, Gualter!
Gual. All is done: prepare your poniards.
Yet—'tis an easy prey. One man in arms
Alone attends the dame. When I had track'd
The Provost to the convent, I return'd
O'er pathless crags, and from the mountain peak
That beetled o'er the pass, with this good pole
Loosen'd the snow-mass. None can pass.
1 *Assas.* Away.
Stab those that dare resist: but spare the Countess:
Her ransom shall enrich us.
Gual. Lead us forth! [*Exeunt.*

Scene, Mountains cover'd with Snow, overhanging the Pass, on the North Side of the Convent. Alfonso climbing over the Rocks.

ALFONSO.

Alf. What! force me back!
Roof me in cloyster'd cells, where never sun
Glanc'd on the face of man! must they explore
Which way I tread: and track me to my haunts,
Like some ferocious beast that makes his lair
In the unfrequented wilderness! what am I?
A wretch, moon-stricken, to be watch'd and bound:
Unfit to bide where man makes residence?

Would that I were not, what indeed I am!
Or being what I am, in form a man,
That heav'n had cast me in the ideot mould,
Of those that in the valley gasp in the sun,
With disproportion'd throats: and uncouth limbs,
That know not their own use.

Con. [*behind the scenes.*] Alfonso! ho!

Alf. Shout on! shout on! here none will look to find me:
Or if they chance to spy me, who will dare
Climb up this giddy edge? they nigh had seiz'd me,
But for that jutting point on which I sprung,
While they past on beneath.

SACRISTAN *and* CONFESSOR *enter.*

Sac. See you the track
Of his uncertain step amid the snow?

Con. It ceas'd on sudden.

Sac. Long my eye pursu'd it,
In mazy shiftings all irregular.

Con. Aye, purposely confus'd to mock pursuit.
He's fled, I fear, for ever.

Alf. [*wildly laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha!

Sac. Heard you that noise?

Con. Sure from the air it burst:
For never foot of man
E'er scal'd these mountains.

Sac. Let us once more hail him.
Alfonso! ho—Alfonso!

[*Clashing of swords heard behind the scenes.*

Agnes. [*behind the scenes.*] Murder—Help—Murder.

Fran. [*behind the scenes.*] This good sword shall free you.

Agnes. [*behind the scenes*] Help from the convent, help.

Sac. What cry was that?

Con. I heard the cry of murder. Hark! 'tis the clash of swords.

FRANCIS *and the* INFIRMIER *enter.*

[*to Francis.* Speak—wherefore thus. Thy looks stare wildly—there is blood upon thee.

Fran. [*to the Infirmier.*] Your limbs are fresh, back to the convent, haste. Ring out th' alarum bell. [*Infirmier goes.*] Three men, assassins, Disguis'd like those that on the mountains urge The chamois chase, have seiz'd the hapless ladies. I battled, long as these sore-mangled limbs Could stand their poniards.

Alf. [*leaping from the rock, and snatching his sword.*] See! th' avenger here! Wash off, kind heav'n! the murder on this blade, By the assassin's blood. Come, lead the way. I have in battle cop'd with mighty men, And foil'd proud warriors.

Fran. Give me, Sir, your arm. My wounds bleed fast [*Exeunt.*

Scene, another part of the Mountains.

AGNES, *Countess of* TORTONA, ELLEN, Assassins.

Agnes. If 'tis my wealth you seek, I gave you all.
Assas. Dame, if your strength had match'd your fearless mind,
Your wealth had ne'er enrich'd us.
Agnes. [*to the other Assassins going to bind Ellen.*] Bind her not:
She scarce has pow'r to lift her hands in pray'r.
Assas. To her, to her she points
Ellen. Oh wound her not.
Here, here, good men, these stones, they say, are diamonds:
This had escap'd you—take it—spare her life.
'Twas once a nuptial present—so—farewell.
[*Kissing the picture, which she gives the Assassin.*
I fondly thought to have worn thee in the grave.
Spare but her life, and I shall die content.
[*Swoons away.*
Agnes. Hear me, unhappy men! and mark my words.
I am Tortona's Countess, and I come
To bear this sufferer, more than daughter to me,
To the lone vale below that gave her birth.
Let me pass on, and this last duty pay,
And, by yon heav'n! I vow,
[*Gives a ring to one of the Assassins.*
Whene'er you show this ring, I will redeem it

With riches, that shall free your future days
From deeds of guilt.

Assas. [*looking upon Ellen.*] Her pulse is still—
it beats not.

Assas. Let not this corse betray us. Plunge it,
there,
Within yon snow-pit.

Assas. Aye. I'll safely tomb her.
Give me the corse.

[*One of the Assassins bears Ellen off.*

Agnes. Oh stay! she is not dead.
Restore her to my arms, I will repay you
With wealth, a monarch's ransom.

Assas. Those will free
Thyself, or thou shalt join her.

Agnes. Ye shall banquet
In golden halls, and o'er your tombs I'll raise
Convents, where holy men by force of pray'r,
Shall save your souls from fiends.

Assas. You promise rarely,

Alfonso [*behind the scenes.*] Die wretch. Go—
bear her to the convent.

Agnes. Heav'n!
I hear the voice of succour. Man! unhand me.

[*Struggling with them.*

Assas. [*going to stab her.*] Nay—if you struggle,
lady! you are dead.

ALFONSO *rushes in, stabs one of the Assassins, in struggling with the other, who flies, he is himself wounded.*

Alf. This to thy heart—fly, murderer—thou art free. [*to Agnes.*

Agnes. Oh what words
Can rightly praise, what earthly gifts reward thee?
Thus, on thy hand, the Countess of Tortona
Prints the warm kiss of gratitude.

Alf. [*falls prostrate.*] Oh—oh.

Agnes. Whence that deep groan? the assassin's steel has pierc'd him.

Alf. [*looking up.*] Not that—I felt it not. Strike—strike me dead.

Agnes. What—for this deed? Let it not grieve thy soul—
Long ages past, a voice from heav'n decreed,
"Who spills man's blood, by man his blood be spilt."
Why art thou silent? Speak.

Alf. But—but forgive me.

Agnes. In what hast thou offended?

Alf. [*to himself.*] I must speak.
The threaten'd torments of the world to come,
Where sinners meet their doom, are center'd here.

Agnes. In what hast thou offended?

Alf. I have left
The path where Virtue led me: I have strown
In the smooth vale of innocence and peace,
Rank baleful seed: and I have pluck'd its fruit

That leaves a scar and blister on the soul,
When all of earth sinks to its native dust.
You know me now. Away—
Agnes. I know none such.
Alf. But you do know my voice.
Agnes. Lift up thy cowl:
Thy features may instruct me.
Alf. Ask not that.
You'll turn away in horror.
Agnes. If thy guilt
Aught touches me, this act of rescu'd life
Obliterates all trace of past offence.
Lift up thy cowl. [*He lifts it up reluctantly.*
Oh Heav'ns!—I know thee not.
Nay—go not hence.
Alf. I would not shock thy soul—
[*To himself.*] I will not see her more. But—oh—
her pardon!
I am (but do not gaze on me) I was,
In happier years, when Virtue led my steps,
Thy husband—
Agnes. [*she recollects him, and screams.*] Thou—
my husband! Julian! Julian!
And yet—I knew thee not. Thou shalt not leave me.
My arms shall hold thee. Thou art more than
pardon'd,
Husband!
Alf. Oh sound once grateful to my soul.
But do not stain thy unpolluted lip.
Look, look not so.

Agnes. I cannot view on earth
One so belov'd.

Alf. Not with that eye of kindness.
I cannot look on thee: oh, if thine eye
Flash'd vengeful light'ning, I'd not turn away.
Thou shalt not hold me more.

Agnes. Am I so hateful?

Alf. Next Heav'n, I honour thee, but ne'er shall saints
Stoop to a fiend's embrace. Why should'st thou weep?
I cannot shed a tear.

Agnes. [*embracing him.*] Weep in these arms:
And as I clasp thee to my heart, recall
Past years of bliss, and pray'rs once heard in Heav'n,
That in each other's arms, blessing and blest,
Our life at once might close, and one the tomb
Rais'd o'er us, join'd in death. Husband! sore woe
Has chas'd away the vision of delight,
That o'er the innocence of untried youth
Diffus'd th' enchanted day-dream: it hath pleas'd
The searcher of the heart, by misery's test,
To prove my soul, and, here, 'mid lonely wilds
Where none but Heav'n can witness, I invoke
His ministering host, again to grave the vow
That links my lot to thine. Come, on this bosom
Rest, and find peace once more.

Alf. Peace! never, never.
'Tis Virtue's heritage.

Agnes. It shall be thine.

Alf. The past—the past.
Agnes. Oh be it with these tears
Eternally forgotten!
Alf. I have born
Unmov'd the shock of horror, but thy kindness
Unmans me.
Agnes, I thought not to have known once more,
The blessing of such tears. [*He weeps.*
Agnes. Oh thou hast groan'd
In bitterness of spirit to the storm,
That smote thee, sweeping by on icy wings,
And none has listen'd to thy woe, no voice
Spake consolation. Where, alas! was Agnes?
Ah! haply whilst thou call'd'st in anguish on me,
I, far away, unconscious of thy woe,
Pour'd unavailing sorrow on the tomb,
That clos'd not o'er thy sufferings. Now behold me
Thus at thy side, more blest to stand the storm,
And sooth thy misery, than in thoughtless years,
When the gay partner of vain joy, alone
I glitter'd in thy sunshine.
Alf. Heav'n reward thee!
Agnes. Heav'n hath rewarded me: once more we meet.
Oh give me all thy grief, and I will steal
Each pang away, and lull thee to repose.
These arms, amid the wilderness, shall stretch
Soft shelter o'er thee, here thy brow be pillow'd:
And ever as thou wak'st, the eye of Agnes
Shall gladden thine: till in the gradual peace

That gains upon thee, I shall taste, once more,
All bliss that earth can give.
Alf. [*falling on her neck.*] Thus let me thank thee—
No—no. [*Starts back in horror.*] Guilt, guilt is on me.
Agnes. None o'er earth,
Pass without stain.
Alf. No common guilt is mine.
Agnes. Bow not beneath despair! I woo thee not
To luxury, and light pleasures, and the dream
Of joy departed. No. But, hand in hand,
Now let us, in affliction doubly dear,
Right onward journeying thro' the vale of woe,
Soothe and support each other. Once again
Here have we met, and never, never more,
If virtue yet have force to sway the heart,
Shall earthly pow'r divide us.
Alf. Oh thou know'st not—
I cannot tell it thee.
Agnes. I know it all.
Oh thou art deeply wounded: drops of blood
Stream on the snow. Come—let thy wife support thee—
Lean on me, Julian. Let us to the convent.
Oh no—not there—not there.
Alf. Support me not.
There was a time—let me depart, I pray thee,
While reason yet is mine. [*more and more confused.*]
'Tis not this wound.
'Tis in my head—my heart—the fiend that tends

On evil deeds, is busy with my soul.
Angel of light! (thou art not of this earth)
Who, from the mansions of the blest, descend'st
On gracious errand to repentant sinners,
Canst thou not quell this demon? drive him hence!
I cannot long sustain this terrible coil?

Agnes. Father of mercy! calm his troubled spirit!

Alf. [*frantic.*] Woman! thou know'st me not.
I know thee well—
Thou art Novara's daughter: the fair prize.
Gaily they came, brave gallants in their trim,
High-plum'd, and banners floating—the proud steeds
Caparison'd, career'd beneath thy throne.
Thou knew'st me then, when from the vanquish'd field
I bore the blushing bride—but—when he struck me—
Thou looking on, upon my nuptial day,
When the proud peasant struck me, at thy side,
Thou did'st forget me—hie thee to thy palace:
But there is one: and well I warn thee, lady!
One of low birth—look, if she flash before thee,
She claims me for her own. We meet no more.

Agnes. We part not, till death parts us.

Alf. Am I thine?
I know not what I speak—if I have utter'd
Sounds grievous to thy soul, thy pardon, Agnes.
It will not be controll'd.

Agnes. Oh be the past
Eternally forgotten! mark me, Julian—
Thy wounds require relief—recall thy mind.

Is there amid these wilds a sheltering roof,
Save yonder convent?

Alf. None—for miles around.

Agnes Oh go not to the convent—yet thou diest
Here without succour—but there is a cause.

Alf. Oh! might I perish here! thus at thy feet,
Thy tears fast falling o'er me.

INFIRMIER *enters with other* Monks.

Inf. Haste! oh haste.
The hapless Ellen!

Agnes. Name her not—I charge thee.

Inf. Thou must attend. For thee alone she grieves.
Her wilder'd fancy views thee pierc'd with wounds
Beneath the murderer's blade, speak comfort to her,
Ere her last breath in frantic horror pass.

Alf. Ellen! and raving—oh! it cannot be.
It is—it is—said'st thou not now? I heard thee.
I must not to the convent? by the love
Thou did'st profess, I do conjure thee, speak:
Is it that hapless one? I may once more
Gaze on her as she dies; and her pale lip
May breathe forgiveness o'er me.

Agnes. Yes—'tis Ellen.
I found her, lone, and raving on thy tomb.
Gaze not above so wildly.

Alf. 'Tis complete.
The measure is complete. The wife has sooth'd her.
What brought thee hither?

Agnes. Pity for her woe.

Nay, more—
The word of Heav'n, that bids me not desert
The orphan and the helpless, nor abandon
To bitter scorn, one innocent of ill.
Alone my presence calms her troubled spirit:
It awes at once, and soothes her. I have hung
O'er her distemper'd dreams, and thro' the night
Bath'd with cool drop her lip of fire, and watch'd her,
As one who tends a daughter—but for me,
Dark brooding grief again had rous'd her soul
To frantic horror; but my voice has wean'd her
From earthly thoughts, and smooth'd her way to Heav'n,
And now ere life quite ceas'd—

Alf. How! was she dying?
Thanks, gracious Heav'n! receive her to thy rest!
Soon will her misery cease—but thine, [*to himself*] poor wretch!
Was she so near her end? then I will see her.
Oh, say, say what brought thee to these wilds?

Agnes. Be calm!
She wish'd once more to view her native vale,
And there to die in peace, and nameless lie
With those from whom she sprung.

Alf. Alas! poor Ellen!
No other wish but that! [*with fervor.*] there shalt thou rest,
Where from the cradle to the grave, thy life
One blameless day, each tranquil as the last,
Had glided on unknown in lowly peace:
But I drew near, and like the tempter, stole

On thy lone paradise—there shalt thou rest.

[*rushing off.*

Restrain me not—

Agnes. Hear—Julian—

Inf. Stay, rash man!

Thy wound bleeds fast. Alas! you scarce have strength

To reach the convent walls.

Alf. [*in wrath.*] Oppose me not—

Ellen! no murderer's blade shall scare thee more.

Who shall delay thy passage? low he lies

[*pointing to the Assassin.*

Who turn'd thee from thy course. I, I will place thee

Beneath the sod, and in thy grave, find mine.

[*rushes out.*

END OF ACT THE FOURTH.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Convent Hall.

PROVOST.

Pro Thou saint in Heav'n!
Thou, who did'st lead Alfonso to these rocks,
Self-doom'd in just atonement for past guilt,
Look down on his affliction.

CONFESSOR *enters.*

Con. Holy father!
These unexampled miseries o'erpow'r me:
Forgive these gushing tears. The hapless Julian!
Pro. Alas! how fares it with him?
Con. As with one
Not long to live: deep was th' assassin's blow.
Faint with the loss of blood, long time he lay
In death-like swoon: here human art avail'd:
But who can heal the anguish of the soul,
Save Heav'n that smites in mercy!
Pro. Say, my brother,
Is he restor'd to reason,
Fitly prepar'd for that eternal state
That knows no change?
Con. Yes, Heav'n has visited
The contrite man. In Agnes' arms he woke,

Calm as from sleep: in fitter hour I'll tell
Their farewell interview: 'tis graven here.
Pro. Then grant, all-gracious Heav'n! his sole request!
Oh may poor Ellen's last forgiveness breathe
Peace to his parting spirit.
Con. Who shall say
What may ensue, if ere they meet again?
Hence flow my tears. At Julian's earnest pray'r,
The virtuous Agnes hangs o'er Ellen's couch,
Watching the moment of returning reason,
That, haply, ere he breathes his last, the voice
Of pardon yet may sooth him.
Pro. Grant it, Heav'n.
Con. I left him still'd in meek and holy sadness,
To bear that parting scene: but much I fear
For hapless Ellen.
Her mind may ne'er regain its peaceful mood.
Say, holy father! may they meet again?
Or will not anguish rouse their souls once more
To frantic agony?
Pro. What Ellen's state?
Con. I cannot call it frenzy,
And yet she is not in her perfect mind.
'Tis no delirium, where the fever's rage
Boils in the blood, and on the throbbing brain,
Shapes images and scenes of spectred horror:
'Tis the mild error of the sense confus'd,
That plays on cheated fancy: for she seems,
All memory of later woe effac'd,

Blissful as once ere bleak adversity
Had ruffled youth's smooth current.
Pro. Such things pass
Man's narrow ken: Heav'n wills it.
Con. Round her couch
She fashions those, who sadly minister,
To the gay partners of her innocent sports,
Poor peasant girls, who cull in spring fresh flow'rs
To wreath their brow, and mix the mirthful dance:
And oft she calls Tortona's dame, who prays
In silence o'er her, her own happy mother,
List'ning with fond attention to the tune
That late she taught her. Me, my mournful duties
Have long familiar made with death-bed woe:
And I have look'd on sinners when despair
Scowl'd, as their eye glar'd fixedly upon me:
But never have I witness'd such a scene;
It quite o'ercomes me: life and death in one
So strangely link'd, and all that's sweet and sad.
Yet—haply as we commune, holy father,
All may be chang'd, and horrid images
Usurp the mastery.
Pro. Let us haste: our pray'rs
May chase the fiend that haunts the bed of death.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene the Second, an Apartment in the Convent.

AGNES, ELLEN *on a Couch, attendant* Monks, *&c.*

Agnes. Hush! rouse her not.
Ellen. [*in a delirium.*] So—enter in, I pray you,
Strangers and all: it is but once a year
We thus make holiday. Not so—not so—
You trip it awkardly, and mar the measure.
The pipe's not out of tune, your step lacks ear.
Oh—I have scarcely breath at once to dance
And teach the motion. [*Ellen sinks exhausted.*

PROVOST *and* CONFESSOR *enter.*

Pro. [*to Agnes.*] Is all quiet with her?
Agnes. No—but exhausted with the play of fancy,
She peaceful sleeps.
Pro. [*considering her.*] Quite breathless, or I err.
Agnes. She but reposes: pray you, rouse her not.
I dread what may ensue: a shock too sudden
In painful horrors may unlodge her spirit.
I have been us'd to these fantastic moods,
Long have I watch'd her, and by tender cares
Had smooth'd her passage to eternity:
But this sad day hath all undone. Oh peace!
Her eyes unclose, and bright their eager glare.
Ellen. Hark! 'twas the shepherd's pipe!
Away! away! haste—to the green hills fly.
I will no longer, while the dog-star flames,

Doze in your sultry plains. The flat air lies
Here, here, like lead upon me: it weighs down
The soul's free wing. Haste, to the green hills, fly.
How daintily the cool breeze fans my brow,
Tangling my locks in many a mazy twine!
Climb o'er yon mountain's peak, that props up
Heav'n:
Mind not that mass of snow: so—heave it off.
Agnes. Compose thyself: here, on my bosom rest.
Ellen. Speak low—speak very low—only in
whispers—
You know not what it is. Stranger! that mass
Which rock-like beetles o'er you, is loose snow.
The mule-bell must not tinkle while it passes:
Its very echo bursts it.
Hail, once more,
My native land! hail sweetest interchange
Of all that chiefly gladdens eye and ear,
Bright lakes, the pine-clad mount, and hill and dale!
Hark! 'twas the Alpine lark that upward trill'd:
Angels may hear it now: 'tis mute to earth:
And oh that sound, most sweet at distance heard,
The hidden waterfall, that in still moon-light
Makes pleasant music to light-tripping elves.
Thou peaceful hut! thou vine, that I have taught
To clasp the rock; and thou my summer bow'r,
Where underneath the green bough's canopy
I sat, nor wish'd for the eagle's stretch of wing,
That swept the upper world: oh never more
Will I away. On you my eye first glanc'd,
On you my dying look shall close in peace:

And there the sod shall rise that hides poor Ellen.
Pray for me—oh, I die.

Agnes. A cold dew stands
On her pale brow. I ne'er saw this before.

Pro. 'Tis the fore-runner of approaching death.

SACRISTAN *enters.*

Sac. [*to Agnes.*] Lady! Alfonso now at life's last close,
Thus speaks thro' me, that he doth feel assur'd
Of Heav'nly mercy, if the death-bed blessing
Of Ellen rest upon him. Canst thou ask it?
Ellen will not deny thee.

Pro. [*bending over Ellen.*] 'Tis, I fear,
In vain—I trace—alas! no sign of life.

Agnes. [*kneels*] Oh Heav'n! in mercy yet awhile keep back
The stroke of death, and to herself restore her:
That one last word may breathe o'er dying Julian,
Peace and forgiveness.

Pro. Heav'n has heard thy voice:
The recompence of virtue shall not fail,
While God is judge above. Her pulse faint flutters.
Hark! that low sigh,

Ellen. [*recovering.*] I pray you, call me not
From Heav'n's eternal rest! where have I been?
Most lov'd, most honour'd lady! art thou near me?
Then I shall die in peace. But—where—where am I?

Agnes. Beneath the convent roof with holy men.

Ellen. [*gazing around her.*] Thanks, holy father:
a poor peasant's child
Can give no more. For thee, thou Saint on earth!
I have a gift: it is the pictur'd form
Of him, who never for one base as I am,
Should have left thee, whom only angels equal.
Where is it?
Agnes. You resign'd it, gentle Ellen,
To rescue me from death.
Ellen. Then, take this kiss:
And—give me thine. [*They embrace.*
Agnes. Ellen—I have a wish,
A pray'r to thee.
Ellen. Oh may my spirit pass
In granting it!
Agnes. We soon shall part for ever.
Ellen. Not so. We meet in Heav'n.
Agnes. But—there is one—
Poor Julian.
Ellen. What of him?
Agnes. Will he be there?
How shall he stand at the appointed day
Before the judgment seat, if thy forgiveness
Rest not upon him?
Ellen. Oh that now he heard me.
'Twere now no sin to gaze upon this face,
And hear the voice that pardons him.
Agnes. And canst thou
Endure the meeting? will it not o'erpow'r thee?
He is beneath this roof. Will it not shock thee
Once more to view him? not, as once, alas,

In pride of manhood, but a contrite sinner
Chastis'd by woe: and, such as now I view thee,
Nigh unto death? yet peace at last would sooth him,
Blest by thy pardon.

Ellen. Heav'n has giv'n me strength.
If he can look on Ellen, hither lead him.
Say, Heav'n is merciful. I pray, delay not:
My breath begins to fail. Be not long absent.
Oh let me, on thy breast, in blessing thee
Breathe out my spirit!

Agnes. Grant me strength, ye saints!
[*Agnes goes out.*

Prior. [*looking on Ellen.*] Her head reclines again. Sure, life has left her.

ALFONSO *led in by* AGNES, *and supported by the* Monks.

Alf. I pray you, mock me not. Is she not dead?
Lift me, and let me gaze upon her face.
[*After long gazing on her.*
How calm! e'en so as when I first beheld thee.
It speaks a soul that past in peace with all:
And if thy placid lip has utterance lost,
That look is like a blessing.

Ellen Agnes? Julian?
Where are you?

Alf. Prostrate at thy feet.

Ellen. Oh, Julian,
In secret oft I pray'd
That thou might'st hear my blessing: Heav'n is gracious.

Give me thy hand: I cannot see thy face,
My eyes grow dim: thy honour'd hand, thou saint!
Thus I unite you. [*joining their hands.*] Heav'n
has heard my pray'r.
Now—Julian, thou art blest. We meet in heav'n.
[*Ellen dies.*
Julian. Father of Mercy! thanks. Support me,
Agnes!
Oh that I ne'er had wrong'd thee! [*Julian dies.*
Agnes. Julian—hear me—
His hand now quits my grasp. Farewell! farewell.
[*She kneels over them.*
Prior. Rise, virtuous mourner, rise! celestial
peace
Be thine! oh thou, who in severest trial,
Firm in thyself, and faultless, shed'st the tear
Lenient o'er human frailty! peace be thine!
[*To the Monks bending over the dead bodies.*
Brethren! o'er these the solemn requiem breathe!
Then, duly in our cemetery place
Till other burial claims: thou, [*to Julian.*] with
thy sires,
In sculptur'd tombs: and thou, [*to Ellen.*] poor
child, with thine,
Nameless beneath the grass-sod.
Soon will pass
Your mortal frames from sight: but long your fate
Shall call down tears from many a stranger guest.
Oft shall they sigh o'er thee, poor peasant girl!
Whose earthly woes, unmerited, await
Heav'n's blissful recompense. For thee, Alfonso!

By thy example, warn the man of guilt,
That Heav'n, who purified thy soul by woe,
And chasten'd with sore wounds, may summon him,
Flush'd from the banquet where sin ranks the guests,
At once before the presence of his God.

THE END.

ORESTES,

A TRAGEDY

IN

FIVE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Men.

Ægisthus, *King of Argos.*
Orestes.
Pylades.
Arcas, *Governor of Orestes.*
Calchas, *Prophet and Priest of Jupiter.*
Nireus, *an ancient Domestic of Agamemnon.*
Phanor, *an Officer belonging to Ægisthus.*
Guards, &c.

Women.

Clytemnestra.
Electra.
Phedra, *Attendant of Clytemnestra.*

SCENE—Argos.

Time—that of representation.

ORESTES.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Temple of Jupiter.

CALCHAS *at the Altar.*

Cal. Hear, Jove supreme !
Thou ! who, o'er all in highest heav'n enthron'd,
Look'st on the frail inhabitants of earth,
Oh hear my prayer ! let not the sun, new ris'n
On this dread day, unconscious of thy pow'r
Withdraw his beams—bid Argos own thy might ;
While thou, in visitation of thy wrath,
On the polluted feast of lust and murther
Shalt loose th' avenging thunder !

NIREUS *enters.*

Calchas, hail !

Cal. What brings thee hither ?

Nire. Clytemnestra's will.
This day, when yearly rites, that mock the heav'ns,
In Argos solemnize the blood-stain'd nuptials,
Fear harrows up her soul.

Cal. [*to himself.*] Their doom is fixt.
Not vain at dawn the omen.

Nire. Clytemnestra
Now bids thee to the palace.
Cal. What, once more
To hear in insolence of pride, Ægisthus
Defy the vengeance of long-lingering Jove,
And taunt his holy priest! Yes—I will go:
If Jove confirm the omen—I will go:
But not to sooth her terror. Yet, say first
Of wrong'd Electra.
Nire. On this day's return,
Not only, as of old, Ægisthus binds
Her limbs with chains, and in the cavern's gloom
Bids her, unheard, rave on her long-lost brother,
Th' avenger, lorn Orestes,
Cal. [*interrupting him.*] Hear, hear, Heav'n!
Nire. But ere the sun go down, his vow is past
To join by force the daughter of Atrides
With one low-born: that never heir arise
To claim the crown of Argos, or avenge
Her murther'd sire.
Cal. The measure is complete.
'Tis doom'd above, the impious are no more.
I will consult the God—Nireus, retire— [*Exeunt.*

Scene the second.—An apartment in the Palace.

ÆGISTHUS—CLYTEMNESTRA.

Ægis. Scorn, Clytemnestra, these unwonted fears:
Prepare to grace the triumph.
Cly. No, Ægisthus—

Not oracles, nor voice of answering shrine,
Signs from the flight of bird, or bleeding victim,
So mark impending doom, as the night vision,
The harbinger of vengeance.

Ægis. Clytemnestra,
Shall idle terrors, shadows of a dream
Subdue thy daring spirit? these are mock'ries
That dotage dwells on, or the senseless fears
Of credulous childhood - -

Cly. [*interrupting him.*] Hear me—

Ægis. I have seen thee
Mid the fierce clamours of the madd'ning tumult
Stand with undaunted brow.

Cly. Thou hast beheld me
Stain'd with the blood of man, a warrior's blood.
The woman stood before astonish'd Argos,
Her dagger dropping gore, I dread none earthly.
This supernatural sight o'er-powers my soul.
Look here—while Clytemnestra shakes before thee,
Hast thou no fear?

Ægis. None from the dreams of night.
While yet Orestes liv'd - - -

Cly. [*interrupting him.*] Is he too murther'd?

Ægis. If gold can bribe, Orestes is no more—
Why droops thy brow? his father's spirit fir'd him:
His hate pursu'd, his vengeful blade hung o'er us.
Speak I ungrateful words, thy son is dead?

Cly. Thou never had'st a child—

Ægis. Mourn not his loss.

Cly. Here, at this breast he hung.

Messenger *enters.*

Mes. Dread Lord, the pomp
Waits but thy presence—
Ægis. Go—bid forth my train.
Come, Clytemnestra, rob'd in Troy's proud spoils,
Grace, as of old, the triumph.
Cly. No—Ægisthus—
I will not grace the triumph: let the base
Conceal their fear: such as I am behold me—
I know not female artifice that lends
The lip of misery a dissembling smile.
No robe of Phrygian state shall blaze on me,
No banquet hail my presence—
Ægis. Have I wrong'd thee?
Dost thou repent the deed that joins our doom?
Cly. Were it again to act, again this hand
Would slay the man who wrong'd me—thee, Ægisthus,
I still have faithful found. Whate'er the fate
That Jove decrees, tho' thunder burst around me,
Thee I will ne'er desert.
Ægis. I know thee now.
Cly. Go, glitter in thy splendor. Yet—I pray thee—
Yet—nay, I charge thee, that no word, no look,
No, not a silent smile betray contempt.
I brook not insult, less from thee than all—
Beware—
Ægis. Why this to me? speak—
Cly. When the spectre

Glar'd on me as I shriek'd—thou—dost not heed me,
'Tis man thou fear'st—hast thou no other fear?

Ægis. Say on—

Cly. I breath'd aloud a vow to heav'n,
That on this fated day his child, Electra,
Should on Atrides' sepulchre, complete
The funeral rites! We reck'd not of the dead.
Th' accepted offerings haply may appease
The avenging spirit—from this blood-stain'd hand
Such rites were profanation.

Ægis. But Electra
Now groans in chains, and, ere the night-fall, forc'd
To hateful nuptials, vents her idle rage
Beneath a servile roof.

Cly. Free her from chains.
Urge not the unequal tie: I have but her.
Yet, if regardless of a mother's will
That daughter mock my fear, fix thou her doom,
E'en what thou wilt, so I no more behold her.
Her voice has terror in it: and her eye
In awful silence fixt on mine, exerts
Strange mastery o'er my spirit—

Messenger *enters.*

Calchas comes.

Cly. Avoid the indignant prophet.

[ÆGISTHUS *exit, as* CALCHAS *enters.*

Holy Seer!
Accept thy Sovereign's thanks, that thou, long time

A stranger to this palace, once again,
At Clytemnestra's call, hast deign'd to hear
What weighs upon her heart—
Cal. [*interruping her.*] No thanks, for this,
To me are due—ere my reluctant step
Past o'er thy threshold, the inspected victim
Gave sign ; alone that signal I obey'd—
Cly. Jove-honour'd prophet ! super-natural horrors,
Mark me the victim of Heav'n's imminent wrath.
Cal.—[*pointing up.*] Their justice reigns—thou shalt not scape thy doom.
Cly. Thy prescience, Seer, can all unfold : thy pray'rs,
Wing'd intercessors at the throne of Jove,
Avert impending destiny, and turn
The thunder in its course.
Cal. Here prayer avails not.
When impious mortals tremble at their doom,
Alone repentance at the throne of Jove
Pleads, and is heard - - - - - Repent !
Cly. Not—not for this
I call'd thee. Priest, thy office hallows thee :
Or, ere this hour, the tongue that rudely taunts
Its sovereign had been mute.
[*Calchas going in anger, she stops him.*
Stay—
Cal. Impious mortal !
I leave thee to thy fate—
Cly. [*detaining him.*] Not unrevealed :

Or shield me from these horrors, or unfold
Clearly the dread unknown: that now my soul
May summon all its strength to meet Heav'n's wrath.

Cal. I speak but what Jove dictates—thou, be brief—

Cly. Calchas, thou know'st, this day, ten years gone by
The son of Atreus perish'd—

Cal. Slain by thee—

Cly. Aye—I deny it not—

Cal. 'Tis known to all.

Cly. He justly fell: and ever on this day
We hold a solemn festival at Argos,
In honour of my nuptials with Ægisthus:
Add - - - if thou wilt - - - of triumph o'er the slain.
This too is known to all—but 'tis not known,
That ever duly on this day's return,
E'en at the very instant, at the dead
Of midnight, when I smote him, a deep groan,
Such as he utter'd when he fell beneath me,
Bursts on my ear: and one, who cries "revenge,"
Floats by; a shapeless figure indistinct:
For I have gaz'd on't with unalter'd eye,
'Till the dim shadow vanish'd from my sight.
Last night the groan was heard, the voice was heard
Of one who cried "revenge:"—the shadow floated:
But gradually the uncertain shape assum'd
The form of Agamemnon, mail'd in arms,
Such as he stands, terrific on his tomb.

Cal. Didst thou then gaze with an unalter'd eye?
Cly. No—'twas himself—I could not gaze on him.
But, ere I turn'd, I saw the wound I made:
And thro' his corselet gush'd the blood: he caught it,
And from the hollow of his hand pour'd forth
An offering to the Furies: then drew near
And cast the dregs on me.
Cal. That was no phantom.
Cly. 'Twas fresh, 'twas living blood, 'twas warm to sense,
Such as it spouted on me when I smote him.
I turn'd aside, but still before my sight
Which way my scar'd eye glanc'd, arm'd Furies stood.
The viper brood that round their tresses tangled
Their scaly coils, turn'd all their stings on me.
On me, each bickering eye, that roll'd in blood,
Shot sparks of fire. A voice of thunder burst,
"Thus, will we lap thy blood"—"the dead shall "slay thee"—
I shriek'd: in rush'd the attendants: all was void—
But they too heard the iron of their feet
That echoed on the pavement: they beheld
The flames in trailing flakes along the gloom—
Say! how shall I appease th' avenging Furies?
Cal. By offerings suited to their ruthless nature.
Cly. Prophet! explain those words—"the dead "shall slay thee."
Cal. [*aside.*] Aid me, inspiring Jove!
Cly. Wilt thou not answer?

Cal. In silence hear the pow'r, who guides my voice.—

Cly. Oh speak!

Cal. This day, a stranger youth, heav'n-sent,
To Argos bears Orestes' funeral urn.—
He can unfold the mystery of fate.—

Cly. Would he were come!

Cal. He comes—obey the God—
Thou, and Ægisthus, to the secret bath
Where Agamemnon perish'd, lead the stranger;
There, force him to reveal, howe'er reluctant,
What Phœbus has imparted—bid Electra
On Agamemnon's tomb libations pour.

Cly. Where bled Atrides? said'st thou—in the bath—
Not there—not there—I pray thee.—

Cal. On that spot
Question the stranger youth: and, if averse,
Force him to speak.—

Cly. I thank thee, Seer! farewell.— [*Exeunt.*

As they go out, Ægisthus *and* Phanor *enter.*

Pha. Electra doth refuse——

Ægis. Refuse to quit
The gloomy cell!

Pha. "No earthly pow'r, this day,
"Shall force me to behold the light I loath."—
Such were her words.—

Ægis. Bid her expect my presence.
[*Phanor goes.*

Oft, proud Electra, hast thou vainly sought
To bear thy offerings to Atrides' tomb:
If proffer'd, thou reject it, never more
Thy voice, domestic fiend, shall threat Ægisthus.
[*Exit.*

Scene the Third, a Prison.

ELECTRA—PHANOR *enters.*

Pha. Ægisthus comes.
Elec. Is there yet more to bear?

ÆGISTHUS *enters.*

Ægis. Go, Phanor—
Elec. No—be present—stir not hence—
With him I hold not secret conference.—
Ægis. Yield not to vain suspicions—if thou wilt,
Detain him—bid him strictly note each word,
Record each look—yet, were no witness near,
Woman, the weakness of thy sex protects thee.
Thou hast no cause for fear.—
Elec. Phanor, retire.—[*he goes.*
We dread not whom we scorn—speak, I am mute.
Ægis. I would that we had met in fitter place!
Elec. It suits a sufferer that delights in grief:
It suits an outrag'd soul that broods on vengeance:
It suits the day, the deed, thee most, base murderer!
Look on these chains: think on the groans of death
That echoed through these vaults.

Ægis. I come to grant
What thou hast oft implor'd.
Elec. I oft have claim'd
Rights still deny'd: the melancholy right,
To shed a tear on the unhonour'd tomb
Of him whom thou didst slay—I ne'er implor'd thee.
Ægis. 'Twere well that thou hadst sued—time was, Electra,
That I with gifts and proffer'd kindness sought
To sooth thy haughty spirit.
Elec. Gifts! to me!
Tyrant! thou speak'st to Agamemnon's daughter!
No bribe can lure the lion race to fawn—
Ægis. Therefore the lion race is gall'd with chains.
Elec. [*with vehement indignation.*] Where art thou, brother?—I had hope in thee—
The sun keeps on his course, and the firm earth
Rests on its base—Yet Jove holds sway in heav'n.
Ægis. I come to free thee from these slavish chains:
Free thee from nuptials that disgrace thy birth,
And bid thee offer at a father's tomb
The long-neglected rites.—
Elec. Thou mock'st me, tyrant—
Ægis. I loose thy chains.—
Elec. No—not a link shall fall.—
These bonds are precious to me—time shall come
When such may chain thee where the Furies close
Their adamantine rivets.—
Ægis. Dost thou wish
To honour Agamemnon?

Elec. More than life—
If life the sacrifice, my father! hear me!
For thee, another daughter gladly dies.
Iphigenia bleeds again in me.

Ægis. Go forth, and place on Agamemnon's tomb
Thy mother's offerings.

Elec. Said I not, thou mock'st me?—

Ægis. I mock thee not. 'Tis Clytemnestra's will.

Elec. Her will! aid, Heav'n! repentance yet may touch her!
Yes. I will bear the offerings. Lead me to her.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Street within the Walls of Argos.

ORESTES *bearing an Urn.* PYLADES, ARCAS.

Arc. Brave youths! by friendship join'd, and now by fate
In common danger yok'd, here safely rest.
None know you here. I, in strange garb disguis'd,
Long absent from these walls, will venture on,
And timely caution give.
Pyla. [*pointing to Orestes.*] How deep his groan!
Grief, like the mildew on the bloom of spring,
Preys on his faded prime. Oh soothe his soul!
Arc. [*to Orestes.*] The oracle of Phœbus shall not fail.
Soon will your mission cease.
Ores. Oh!
Pyla. Why that groan?
Arc. He droops o'er-wearied—rest—behold the goal—
These are the walls of Argos. There, the palace
Tow'rs proudly eminent.
Ores. Oh!
Pyla. Droop not, brother.
Arc. Thou! whom these arms receiv'd, e'en from the cradle,

When sad Electra rescued thee from death,
Orestes! firmly execute thy charge.
Thou, Pylades! watch o'er him, rouse his soul
By words that fire the hero. Here remain—
I will not long be absent. [*Exit.*

Pyla. Lean on me.
Friend of my soul! thou more than brother, come,
Lean on this faithful breast!—tho' long the way,
And rough the mountain tract, I oft have seen thee
From dawn to night-fall urge the brindled wolf,
And laugh to scorn the partners of the chase,
That fainted in the noon-beam—silent—still—
Think on the race when you outstript the Phocian,
Nam'd from his speed, the Brother of the Wind.—

Ores. [*to himself.*] These are the walls of Argos.

Pyla. Look upon me—
Hast thou forgot, when thou a boy didst wield
The cæstus' weight, and levell'd at a blow
Polydamas, who, proud of giant size
Unrivall'd, buffetted in sport the wind?

Ores. [*to himself.*] There tow'rs the palace, proudly eminent.—

Pyla. Alas! the themes once wont to please, avail not!

Ores. Oh dire disgrace! that Agamemnon's son
Should thus approach the palace of his fathers!
Thus lone, disguis'd, and stranger to his kin,
The midnight plunderer in the gloom that shrouds him,
Starts, as he falters on—Oh! Pylades!
We, in the light of day, 'mid wondering throngs,

When every eye gaz'd on us, oft have vow'd
To rush where glory summon'd us, tho' death
Stood at the goal, and held the wreath to crown us.
But—now—

Pyla. Thou must obey th' inspiring God.
By artifice, not force, ensure success—
Rouse from despair—revenge thy father's death!

Ores. By any deed but this—a mother's murther!

ARCAS *enters.*

Arc. Brave youths! go boldly on—the palace gates
Are left without a guard: and Clytemnestra,
(So rumour speaks) lone broods o'er boding fears.

Ores. [*with horror.*] Not that the place—not this th' appointed hour—
At midnight—in the bath—where fell my father—
Not in obscure response Apollo spoke.

Arc. First, Orestes,
Bear the feign'd tale to Clytemnestra's ear.
That done, on Agamemnon's tomb complete
The funeral rites. There claim th' appointed signal.
On that thy doom depends: on that, the faith
Due to the Delphic shrine. Thy father's image
Shall, as instinct with life, thrice wave his lance;
Or we are made the mockery of vain words,
And murther stalks unpunish'd—

[*A festive chorus in the procession of Ægisthus is heard.*]

Hark! that sound
As of some festive choir!

PHANOR, *with some of Ægisthus's guards enters.*

Pha. What may this mean?
Why bends that mourner o'er the funeral urn?
Nought of disastrous portent on this day
Shall cloud rejoicing Argos—hence!—[*to Orestes.*
Ores. Beware—
Arc. Touch not that youth—we mean not to offend—
Pha. Hence!
Pyla. Say, ere we depart, why rings the shout
Of joy and choral song?
Pha. 'Tis Argos' feast,
Her annual feast: when every slave and captive,
Free as his lord, the common banquet shares.
Pyla. What cause thus consecrates a nation's joy?
Pha. Ægisthus' nuptials!
Ores. [*who, till now, had appeared regardless of their discourse, bursts forward.*]
Slave! 'tis false.
Pyla. Oh heed not—
Grief for the dead distracts him.
Pha. On, I haste
To join the pomp. Away, nor linger here,
Sullying with ill-tim'd gloom the general joy.
[*Exit.*
Ores. [*drawing a dagger.*] Come, Pylades—he dies—a lion's nerve
Strengthens my sinews.
Arc. Stay, rash youth! you rush

On self-destruction—Guards and thronging crouds
Compass him round.—
Ores. Nor guards, nor throngs avail,
When vengeance strikes the blow by justice doom'd,
It strikes like Heav'n's wing'd bolt: earth quakes beneath it,
And all that live fly from the prostrate victim.
I will not be restrain'd——come—
Arc. Pylades!
If thou regard his life, oh hold, detain him!
[*the chorus is again heard.*
Ores. That shout again! I will not be controll'd!
Oh may it rouse the thunder that but sleeps
At Jove's right hand!—Away——
Pyla. [*restraining him.*] Orestes—friend!
Ores. Ha!
Pyla. Hear me!
Ores. Any pray'r—but that—but that—
Thou sway'st at will each impulse of my soul.—
Pyla. My brother!
Ores. Do not, I beseech thee, urge
Thy influence o'er me—heard'st thou? 'tis his feast!
Base Argos revels for Ægisthus' nuptials!
It is Ægisthus, not a mother's breast
I haste to pierce.——
Pyla. The oracle decreed,
Art should prevail, not force.
Ores. [*his hand on his breast.*] Here—here it speaks—
I want no other oracle. Stay thou—

Jove! let me strike him dead! I ask not life.
Farewell.——

[*as he rushes out, Pylades embraces him.*

Pyla. We die together.—

Ores. Stay, my brother!

Pyla. Lead on!

Ores. But—they will slay—thee—

Pyla. Boldly go.—

Ores. Mould, mould me at thy will—what shall I do?

Pyla. Swear, if thou meet the tyrant in his triumph,
Thou wilt not strike him ere th' appointed time.

Ores. An oath! to thee!—my friend! take my pledg'd hand.

Arc. Oh virtuous youths! great Jove! in safety guide you. [*Exeunt.*

Scene the Second.—The Great Square.

The triumphal procession of Ægisthus.—*He, in a Car, adorn'd with garlands, drawn by four Horses.—Music, Choral Hymn, Guards, People shouting.*

Arcas, Orestes, Pylades, *crossing the stage.*

Arc. I pray you, pass this way—avoid the press.

Ores. E'en where thou wilt.

Pha. [*seeing them.*] Unmanner'd stranger! hence.
Bear off that funeral urn.—

Ores. Let me pass on.—

Pha. Guards! force him from the place—
Ægis. What means this tumult?
Pha. Regard it not, oh King! some men, obscure,
Strangers, it seems, to Argos—
Ægis. Ha! an urn
Crossing our pomp! reveal your name, your country.
Disclose your purpose?—speak—
Ores. Our country, Phocis:
Of race unknown to fame.
Ægis. Whose ashes, Phocians,
Rest in that urn?—
Ores. —We bear to Clytemnestra—
Ægis. [*interrupting him.*] The ashes of Orestes?
Ores. —in this urn—
Ægis. [*descending from his car.*] Thrice welcome!
strangers! share our joyful feast—
Not unrewarded you return from Argos.—
Give him that royal robe.—
Ores. We seek no gifts—
We may not share the banquet—look on this.
[*the urn.*
From Strophius we are come—the Lord of Phocis—
By whose command we bear the last remains
Of him that was Orestes—When he fell
Before the Altar of the Delphian God,
Slain by an Argive,—
Ægis. —Cease—we reck not this—
Ores. King! it imports thee much—When slander strikes
The fetter'd slave, he, bold in innocence,
Confronts the base accuser, and asserts

The dignity of virtue! hear, Ægisthus!
Orestes slew the wretch who pierc'd his breast;
And the Assassin with his dying breath,
Pronounced—

Pyla. [*endeavouring to silence him.*]
Peace, brother!

Ores. [*not regarding him.*] That Ægisthus sent him!

Ægis. [*after a long pause.*] That urn, thou say'st, contains Orestes' ashes:
Why hither brought?—Phocis knows funeral rites.

Ores. May not the ashes of a son repose
Where sleeps his sire?—May not one kindred tear
Be shed upon his urn, who never knew
In life the blessing of a kindred smile?

Ægis. Electra lives—a mother's tear, no doubt—

Ores. [*aside.*] A mother—

Ægis. —Go—to Clytemnestra bear
The ashes of her son—
[*to his guard.*] Ye—safely guard him.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene the Third—an Apartment in the Palace.

CLYTEMNESTRA, PHEDRA.

Phe. Vainly I urg'd—Electra still refuses,
(No cause assign'd) from other hand than thine,
To take the funeral offerings—this the bowl—
And this the consecrated hair you sent—
[*presents them.*

Cly. No other hand but hers may bear the gift:
None left, save her alone. 'Twas Calchas spoke it:
I may not disobey—conduct her hither—
[*Phedra goes.*
Omit whate'er these Prophets have enjoin'd,
All fails, and we, forewarn'd, provoke our doom.

ELECTRA *and* PHEDRA *enter.*

Cly. [*to Electra.*] Thou hast refus'd to bear my funeral offerings!

Elec. I dar'd not place them on my father's tomb,
'Till I had commun'd with thee—

Cly. Say—what cause?—

Elec. What cause? And dost thou ask? And shall I speak it.

Cly. Haply thou deem'dst it base, beneath thy birth,
To take these gifts from other hands than mine?

Elec. I long have suffer'd base indignities—
Lo, these—— [*her chains.*

Cly. I bad Ægisthus free thee.

Elec. Yes,
He proffer'd—I refus'd—

Cly. Yet, in that guise,
Offerings were insult—

Elec. No—'tis when the woman
Who slew her husband, mocks his tomb with gifts.

Cly. Daughter!——

Elec. Oh, would that I could answer—Mother!

Cly. My soul is overcharged with horror. Spare me—

Elec. Therefore I came. 'Tis now the suited time
When words may pierce the soul. Oh! had I found thee
A thoughtless reveller, rob'd in nuptial pomp,
And smiling at the thron'd adulterer's side,
I never had addrest thee—now I view thee
Clad in the garb of woe: and thy pale hue,
Marks the deep wound that festers in thy soul.
I see this, yet rejoice not: no, nor feel
The triumph that repays, exalts the opprest
When the oppressor falls. Behold these tears—
They stream for thee—

[*clasping Clytemnestra's hand.*

Cly. And have I yet a child?

Elec. Oh, pow'r of heav'n! now give me words of force
To change the soul. Turn not away, my mother!
No whisper of reproach shall wound thy ear.
We long have been estrang'd, not known each other:
For ever, at my coming, base Ægisthus
Stood like a fiend between us. Oh, my mother,
Year after year has past unheeded o'er thee.
In the brief breathing space, this side the tomb
In mercy left, one moment yet is thine:
The present—Now.
Oh! on the tablet of eternity,
Record it by contrition—

Cly. [*highly agitated, aside.*] Oh, I cannot!

Elec. Turn not away—not for myself I plead.
All, I forgive thee all. I plead for one
Lov'd more than life. I plead for sad Orestes:

For a lov'd brother; for thy son, I plead.
Recal the wanderer——
Cly. Oh!
Elec. At Argos crown him.
Restore him to the empire of his fathers;
So will I bear the votive gifts, and sooth
Him, him that was thy husband. I will tend
Thy troubled couch: nor leave thee at the hour
When guilt at death's approach, shall rise before thee,
A Fury arm'd. Repent, and crown Orestes.
Cly. Ah, haply at this hour, he too ——

PHEDRA *enters.*

Phe. Dread Queen!
Sent from Ægisthus, at the palace gates
A stranger youth—-
Cly. A stranger youth!
Phe. Who bears
A funeral urn.
Cly. 'Tis he—I come, I come—
Elec. Not yet—oh hear!
Cly. My fate on him depends.
Elec. Now, on my knees, I pray one moment hear me.
I saw thy big tear tremble. Oh, my mother!
We never, since the day my father died,
Have known one common woe.
Cly. No more detain me.
'Tis he—away—
Elec. [*in anger.*] Dost thou despise my prayer?
I on my bended knee have clasp'd thy hand.

Cly. Say, wilt thou bear these offerings to the dead?

Elec. Yes: or I ne'er shall view my father's tomb.

Cly. Away.——— [*Exit.*

Elec. [*to Phedra.*] Take thou the offerings—follow me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the Gates of the Palace, magnificently decorated with Trophies.

PHANOR *and Guards*— ARCAS, ORESTES, PYLADES.

Pha. These are the gates with Ilium's trophies grac'd—
Pass not that threshold—here exepect the Queen.

Ores. [*after a pause of wonder.*] Hail, palace! and thou portal! o'er whose arch
The spoils of Troy by Agamemnon plac'd—

Pyla. [*interrupting him, aside.*] Beware—we are observ'd—the guard yet lingers.

Clytemnestra [*heard in entering.*] Where is the stranger? Clytemnestra greets him.

Ores. [*hearing her voice, looks up.*] Turn me to stone, or I am lost for ever.

CLYTEMNESTRA, ELECTRA, PHEDRA, *enter.*

Art thou the mother of Orestes?

Cly. Yes—

Ores. Whom then behold I there, of royal port?

Elec. His sister.

Ores. Thou—Electra!

Elec. What of him?

Ores. Thou, that Electra! thou—Orestes' sister.

Elec. Long suffering bears the show of length of years.

Be but Orestes safe, and life new-born
Will glow in every vein—thou answer'st not—
Why art thou silent?

Cly. [*impatiently.*] Say, what brought thee hither?
Stranger! why thus transfixt in senseless woe?
Why gaze on her? I, I am Clytemnestra.

Ores. I come, the bearer of a mournful tale
To thee and to thy race.

Elec. Hah!

Cly. Youth! disclose it.

Ores. Heav'n haply has possest thee with a spirit
That yields not to misfortune—on that brow—
[*Electra.*
I note alas! the lineaments of one
Who will not hear my tale of woe, unmov'd—
Let her depart: and one brief word unfolds
My mournful mission.—

Cly. Hear'st thou not, Electra?

Elec. Speak it.

Ores. I pray thee urge her to retire.

Cly. [*to Electra.*] Thou hear'st—

Elec. I stir not hence—my soul is dead
Alike to joy and grief, save that alone
Which from a brother flows—and if thou bring
Aught of Orestes, till thy voice reveal it,
No force shall hence remove me.

Ores. [*to Electra.*] Arm thy soul—
Here lies, within this urn, what was Orestes.
An Argive basely slew him—we, from Phocis,
Bring this to place it in Atrides' tomb—
Thou hast my mission.—

Elec. Wherefore should I breathe?
I have no hope—earth! hide me in thy womb!
[*falls down.*

Ores. Oh let me raise thee!—

Elec. Touch me not, I charge thee.
Not with that hand that held Orestes' urn.
My father! thou shalt hear, and aid Electra.—
[*Exit.*

Ores. Oh!

Cly. Heed her not!—thy unexpected words
Have pierc'd my heart. Yet, stranger! go not hence.
[*to all the others.*] You—stand apart—good youth!

Ores. [*with horror.*] What would'st thou, woman?

Cly. Thy aid!

Ores. I cannot aid thee—

Cly. Thou alone
Canst free my soul from agonising horror.
Gifts of rare worth shall crown thy prompt compliance.
A feast is in the palace held this night:
I shall not join the revels—while they banquet,
Meet me alone. Things of high import urge.
Why dost thou turn away?

Ores. Meet thee alone!
Oh! ask not that!

Cly. A heav'n-taught Seer enjoin'd it—
The prophet Calchas.—
Ores. Ha! 'tis passing strange!
Cly Say thou consent'st—
Ores. I'll meet thee.
Cly. Lone—
Ores. Expect me. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Street in Argos.

ORESTES—PYLADES.

Ores. Arcas will soon return—here wait his coming.
I must depart alone—
Pyla. Why force me from thee?
Ores. Forbear—
Pyla. Not habit, nor the ties of blood,
But sympathy of nature made us one;
We never have been sunder'd—hand in hand,
We still with equal pace have shap'd our course
Till this sad hour—our joys, our griefs the same.
One cradle rock'd our infant sleep: our sports
In youth the same; the same adventurous perils
Enur'd our growing strength to stem the battle—
Ores. Were it to stem the battle, Pylades!
We were not now to part!
Pyla. Yet, let me join thee.
Each wish, new springing in thy mind, ere utter'd,
My ready zeal prevented. Grant me this.
Ores. Brother, thou art unkind: it wrings my soul.
Strange doubts perplex—I will not long be absent.
There dwells the prophet, a brief word at once
Unveils the mystery; I go alone.
Farewell.

Pyla. Yet—go not thus in anger from me!
Ores. Come, to my heart. And, if it seem, my brother,
That there beyond just time I linger—
Pyla. Well—
Ores. Seek me.
Pyla. I shall not fail—this, this is kind.
One word—and then—farewell—
Ores. Be brief—
Pyla. Orestes,
Now, by the vow that death should ne'er disjoin us,
When, prostrate at the hallow'd shrine of friendship,
Tears, for each other shed, gush'd forth; I charge thee
If the Seer threaten danger, call on me.—
Ores. I would not live without thee. Art thou answer'd?
Pyla. Farewell. [*Orestes goes.*] His gloomy silence awes my soul.

ARCAS *enters.*

Arc. Where is Orestes? leave him not, I charge thee—
Pyla. Hast thou not prosper'd, Arcas?
Arc. None are left
Of Troy's proud conquerors, save neglected veterans
Who dare not shew a scar. On every side
New dangers threat. Suspicion closely marks us.
E'en 'mid the license of the public feast
The guards are doubled, and each question'd stranger
Who falters in his answer—

PHANOR *enters.*

Pha. [*to Arcas.*] Follow me.— [*guards enter.*
Arc. In what have I offended?
Pha. Not unwatch'd
Hast thou held secret conference with men
Of sterner times, who shun us as a race
That have forgot our fathers. Come thou forth
Where tortures shall force out unwilling truth.
Arc. [*looking on Pylades.*] Be sure, no torture shall unlock these lips.
Pha. [*to Pylades.*] Speak'st thou to him—thou too beware—his fate
Perchance impends o'er thee. [*Exeunt.*
Pyla. Lost, lost Orestes! [*Exit.*

Scene changes to the Temple of Jupiter.

CALCHAS.

Cal. [*to a Minister.*] Now let him enter. The clear sparkling flame
[*Orestes slowly advances.*
Gave no ungrateful sign—approach the altar.
Ores. Hail!
Cal. Not reluctance, youth! nor ought of honour
Due to the Minister of highest Jove,
Delay'd thy entrance: holy rites detain'd me:
And suppliant Kings must wait till fav'ring omens
Permit approach.
Ores. Hail, Seer! I bring thee not

Off'rings of votive gold, and precious incense:
No victim led by me shall stain the altar.
If heav'n, ungifted, hears not him who calls,
Seer, I retire in silence.
Cal. There are gifts
Of higher rate than gold and hecatombs:
Gifts, which from op'ning heav'n draw blessings down:
The tribute of an uncorrupted heart.
If such thy offering, speak—
Ores. My years are few.
As yet—these hands are pure—but—
Cal. Freely speak.
Ores. If thou canst read the heart, in mine behold
The bittter conflict of a troubled spirit,
That agonis'd by woe, doubt, fear, despair,
Dreads e'en the wreck of reason.—Seer, assist me.
Cal. Poor youth! I pity thee—I will assist thee—
My voice shall still the tumult of thy soul.
Ores. [*with vehemence.*] Thou still the tumult of my soul!—oh, rather
Urge to its height the storm, that so my arm
May execute its mission—holy Seer!
Thou talk'st to one of that disastrous mood
Whose mind no longer master of itself,
Acts not its own resolve. Seer! I am bound
To deeds that shock my nature. 'Tis most horrible!
Turn this to stone, [*striking his breast.*] that, at the name of mother
Sheds drops of blood, and I will do the deed!
[*Falls on the altar.*

Cal. [*after a pause.*] 'Tis he—the long expected—
[*aside.*] 'tis th' avenger.
Thou must perform, unquestion'd, Heav'n's command—
Ores. [*rising gradually almost to frenzy.*]
Prophets may speak, and Oracles pronounce
"So move"—"this deed be done"—"'tis Heav'n's
"command"—
But they forget that the poor instrument
To execute that will, is Man, weak Man.
Rocks, at the call divine, leap from their base,
Earth, at the word, deep to its centre shakes,
The sea, and the wing'd storm, and fiery bolt,
Wait but a nod. Be these the instruments
To execute Heav'n's vengeance on the world.
But let not man be urg'd to shed man's blood.
What, if the guilt of an abandon'd woman
That slew her husband, calls down signal vengeance!
Must the son plunge a dagger in the heart
Of her who bore him?
Cal. Aid, inspiring Jove!
Offspring of Agamemnon, Troy's great conqueror,
Orestes!—
Ores. How—Orestes! why thus call
A wandering stranger, a lost wretch unknown?
Cal. [*with enthusiastic dignity.*] I know thee—
know thou me—'tis Calchas speaks.
I at the altar stood the ministering priest,
This consecrated blade I hold before thee,
Gleam'd in my hand, descending swift in act
To pierce the proffer'd bosom of thy sister,

Whom Agamemnon to Diana's shrine
Had led, his first-born, Iphigene, to slaughter.
The virgin knelt beneath me, and to heav'n
Look'd up with fearless eye; before me, bow'd
The father, in his mantle veil'd from sight.
I heard his groan: deep as the groan of death.
The father felt: the chief of Greece obey'd.
Taught by thy father, son, obey the Gods.
Fir'd by thy sister - - - -

Ores. [*seizing his dagger.*] Seer—'tis done—thy dagger!

Cal. This never shall be stain'd with human blood.
Hast thou forgotten it? not this the blade—
Heav'n, in fit time, will arm thee with a weapon
Forg'd for the deed.

Ores. [*full of horror.*] 'Tis true—the very blade,
(Said it not so?) with which she slew my Father.
So spake the Pythian: and that none, save that,
And trusted to me by a mother's hand
Must do its office. How shall I obtain it?

Cal. Ere night—thou shalt possess it—now delay not.
Go to thy father's tomb, invoke his shade:
There Fate's portentous sign shall fix thy doom.
If unappeas'd the spirit claim revenge,
Strike, without dread—farewell.—

Ores. Seer!—I obey. [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the Tomb of Agamemnon.—His Statue in armour on the Sepulchre.

ELECTRA, PHEDRA.

Elec. Forgive! dread spirit of my sire! forgive!
Bring me the bowl—the offerings—on the tomb
Lo, these I place: this, on the earth pour forth—
Heard you that hissing foam? the unhallow'd stream
Bubbles, and froths, and vanishes, in fumes
Loathsome to sense. And, see the earth beneath
Peel'd bare, as if the light'ning, in its passage
Had scath'd it, marking out to unborn ages
A spot accurst, where grass nor herb shall spring.
To Clytemnestra go. I have obey'd
Her will. Relate, most solemnly I charge thee,
What thou hast witness'd here ——

Phe. I shall not fail. [*Exit.*

Elec. Oh honour'd shade! that in the realms of night
Hast sense of human act (else wherefore this?)
[*pointing to the earth.*
Deign thou to pardon, that a daughter's hand
Has dar'd pollute thy sepulchre, with gifts
From her—who slew thee. I have none to offer—
But I will pour upon thy tomb, my Father!
Vows that more priz'd than incense of the east,
Shall gratify thy spirit. Vows of vengeance:
Vengeance against thy slayers. Sire! assist me!
None breathe on earth who hear Electra's cry.

He, he, for whom alone, hope yet awhile
Sustain'd my soul, Orestes is no more.
The rather thou arise! that, at thy voice,
A woman's feeble arm may strike the blow
Resistless as Jove's thunder—Hark! some step
Approaches—here I may unseen retire.
'Tis he—the Phocian, whose unhallow'd tongue
Proclaim'd Orestes' death.

[*conceals herself behind the tomb.*

PYLADES, ORESTES, *enter.*

Pyla. Draw near the tomb.
Ores. Give me the urn—no hand but mine may place it—
Elec. [*starts forward.*] Yes—there is one—
Ores. Thou! here—
Elec. Nay—start not, stranger!
Thou in my soul hast fixt a cureless wound:
Yet, if thy heart be human, sooth my woe!
Ores. What is thy wish!
Elec. Give me, I pray, that urn—
Ores. This cannot sooth thy woe.
Elec. Thou ne'er hast known
A sister's love—
Ores. Alas!
Elec. Give me the urn—
So never may'st thou know that grief of heart
Which finds its only solace in the tear
That falls upon the dust of one most lov'd.
Ores. [*aside to Pylades.*] May I consent?

Elec. Thus—on my knee—
Ores. Oh rise!
Elec. Consent, I pray—the tears steal down thy cheek!
Oh youth! thou can'st not now refuse my pray'r.
Ores. [*to Pylades.*] Rise—take it!—friend! these gushing tears betray me—
Pyla. Be firm! 'twere dangerous to reveal the truth.
Elec. [*clasping the urn.*] Orestes! oh my brother! oh sole cause
For whom I have sustain'd year after year
The ills of loath'd existence! thou art gone!
Thou too hast left me! left me, reft of hope,
To shed lone tears that bathe th' unfeeling urn.
Was it for this I snatch'd thee from the cradle
When keen-ey'd murther thirsted for thy blood?
I rescued thee that thou in manhood's strength
Might rise th' avenger of a father's death:
Rise, the restorer of a glorious race
Which sprung from Jove! here, here, alas! thou liest.
While yet my hand has strength to hold the urn,
Oh while my lips now press the farewell kiss,
Strike, strike me dead, kind Heav'n! and thou, oh stranger!
(I have no kin, no friend, no brother left)
Here place Electra.—Blest alone in this,
That death unites her ashes with Orestes.
Ores. [*bursting from Pylades.*] I will not be restrain'd—thou hast a brother.
Behold Orestes here.

Elec. Thou—thou—Orestes!
Ores. Behold this well known sign.
Elec. Oh! [*shrieks.*
Ores. Trust the oath
Of vengeance breath'd on Agamemnon's tomb.
Elec. [*rushing to his arms.*] I trust my heart—
and do I hold thee living?
Oh, let me gaze on thee, thou godlike youth!
Clasp thee again! oh let me feel once more
The pressure of thy arms, and thy warm breath
That pours new life within me.
Ores. Oh, my sister!
And is it thus we meet? how pale thy cheek
Oh thou hast suffer'd much!
Elec. 'Tis all forgotten—
Oh, golden light of day! and thou, great Jove!
Hear my exulting voice!
Pyla. [*interrupting her.*] Restrain, Electra!
These shouts of clamorous joy—
Elec. What envious stranger
Dares interrupt my transport?
Ores. Look on him—
'Tis Pylades—my friend.
Elec. My second brother
Thou com'st to share our triumph.
Pyla. Oh restrain
Thy transport—much I fear—
Elec. [*interrupting him.*] What cause for fear?
Doubt'st thou success will crown us? 'tis Orestes!
Who can oppose him? so stood Hercules
When the Nemæan lion gasp'd beneath him.

Ores. This is no hour of triumph—cease, Electra!
This is a dreadful crisis mark'd by fate.
My Pylades! thou know'st that none on earth,
Save Agamemnon's offspring, must be present
When I invoke his shade, and claim the signal,
Dread harbinger of vengeance.

Pyla. I must leave thee—

Ores. To Calchas go—there, in due time, expect me. [*Exit.*

Electra, hear! nor interrupt my words,
How strange soe'er———

Elec. Speak—not the dead more silent—

Ores. It fits thee, but in part, and briefly, now,
To know how past my youth:—let this suffice:
Such lore, as suits a monarch, Strophius gave.
When the first down began to shade my cheek,
(A few fleet months now past) Strophius reveal'd
My birth, till then unknown; and at the shrine
Of Phœbus, bade me from the God enquire
My future fate—I went—a voice thus hail'd me.
"Son of a murther'd Father! thine to slay
"The slayers—they, by fraud, the chieftain smote.
"By fraud they perish. At thy twentieth year"
(Complete this day, e'en this, on which they hold
The feast of blood)—"to Argos go, thyself,
"The bearer of the tale that speaks thee dead.
"At midnight—in the bath—on the same spot
"Where bled Atrides—with the self-same weapon,
"That steel with which the wife her husband slew,
"Son, pierce thy mother's bosom"—at the word
I swoon'd—Electra— [*she seems fainting.*

Elec. I am sick at heart—

Ores. Oh thou hast more to hear, more dreadful far!

Elec. 'Tis past—proceed—

Ores. A voice of thunder rous'd me—

" Mortal! if thou dispute the will of heav'n,
" Hear thy dread sentence—thou shalt roam o'er earth
" Stranger to man. No house shall give thee shelter:
" No hospitable board afford thee food:
" The rock thy resting-place: thy fellowship
" With beasts of prey: foul leprosy shall eat
" Thy life, by lingering pangs slow worn away."

Elec. [*highly agitated.*] Brother, thou shalt obey. They knew not mercy.

Ores. I dare not disobey—look here, [*shews his arm.*] Electra!

Elec. 'Tis horrible—

Ores. And ne'er to be effac'd
But by the gushing blood of her who bore me—

Elec. Thrice, thrice she struck the blow, without remorse—
What follow'd, quickly speak—

Ores. With shuddering awe
I bow'd, and touch'd the altar—then the voice
Spake as before. " To Argos, go, invoke
" Thy Father's shade: if, unappeas'd, the manes
" Claim justice, the fixt statue on his tomb
" Shall thrice, in sign of vengeance, wave his spear."

Elec. [*starting up.*] Shade of my Father! rise, and save Orestes.
Begin the invocation.

Ores. Yet—my sister!—
Elec. Why this delay?
Ores. I have a secret grief.
I dread to utter it—
Elec. Confide in me.
Ores. He knows it not, the friend, the bosom friend,
Who reads my heart—I would not shock his soul.
He, he, perhaps, would fly this fated wretch.
Elec. Electra, never—by our father's spirit
Who watches o'er us, I conjure thee, speak.
Ores. Know, when my mother bleeds (so spake the voice)
Her furies from that hour shall goad me on,
(Rendering each day a curse, each night unholy,)
From land to land, till back to Greece I bring
From Tauris' shrine, with blood of strangers stain'd,
One sacred to Diana—this was utter'd:
And, that of all on earth, but one alone
Should watch my flight, and tend me at the hour
When Furies howl around me——
Elec. Yes, my brother,
'Mid direst woe, the Furies howling round,
Rendering each day a curse, each night unholy,
I will alone watch o'er thee. Thou, my brother!
Shalt on this sheltering bosom rest thy brow:
And, when, at intervals, peace sooths thy soul,
Thou too wilt turn a kindred eye on mine,
And kindly look on me—delay no more.
Begin the invocation.
Ores. Now, Electra,

Gaze on the statue with unshrinking eye,
I dare not trust my senses. If it stir,
In silence follow me—Shade of my Father!
If unappeas'd thy manes:—if the blood
Of those who slew thee shall be shed for thine,
If 'tis thy awful mandate that the son
Should slay his mother——

[*Amid peals of thunder and flashes of lightening the Statue waves the spear, and a voice cries,*
"Vengeance, vengeance, vengeance."]

END OF ACT THE THIRD.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Temple of Jupiter.

CALCHAS.

Cal. The light'ning flash'd—the spirit claims revenge—
Dark prophecies, of old obscurely veil'd,
Flash on the sight—the son shall slay his mother!
Soul of the guilty! melt with fear! shake earth!
While justice from her adamantine throne
Applauds the righteous deed—

PYLADES *enters,*

Pyla. Some danger low'rs.
They are not at the tomb—forlorn Orestes,
Who shall protect thee now?
Cal. The pow'r who sent him.
Wait thou the destin'd time—
Pyla. Yet, Seer! reflect,
The horrors of the scene, the gloom of death.
The invocation of a vengeful spirit,
The call and summons to a mother's murther,
And that portentous signal which confounds
The faculties of man: these, singly, shake
Minds of firm texture: and combin'd 'gainst one

Of soul so deeply agonis'd, at once
May o'erturn reason.—Hah! [*seeing Arcas enter.*
Arc. Time-honour'd Calchas—
Pyla. Ha!—can it be?—thou never hast betray'd us—
Arc. They might have torn my body, limb by limb,
These lips were clos'd for ever.
Pyla. What preserv'd thee?
Arc. The visible arm and agency of Heav'n.
Cal. Hear, son of Strophius!
And, in still reverence, bow before the Gods.
Pyla. Relate what pass'd.
Arc. I stood before Ægisthus.
'Twas noontide: bright the sun, the monarch rode
In pomp of triumph, then while loud his slaves
Shouted "Behold a God," from cloudless heav'n
Jove shot the lightning down, and all was still.
Cal. They knew not what it meant—I watch'd the bolt
That flash'd portentous, as the answ'ring spirit
Claim'd vengeance.
Arc. Unappall'd, the tyrant rag'd:
Again the lightning flash'd, his steeds transfixt
Fell breathless. From his seat the monarch rose,
His rent robes widely flutter'd, and his hair
Stream'd loosely, sing'd with flame: but, in his eye
Pride glow'd, and indignation: and his brow
Uplifted, hurl'd defiance 'gainst the God.
He mock'd at heav'n, and earth: and, at the sight
Of me in chains, smil'd in contemptuous mood,
And bad me join the feast.

Attendant *enters.*

Prophet! Ægisthus
Now summons thee.
Cal. Say, I attend. Go, thou— [*to Arcas.*
Murderer! I will confront thee, and each word
Of prescient truth, to every ear, but thine,
Shall mark thy imminent death!

ELECTRA, *and* ORESTES *close veiled, enter.*

Pyla. Electra here!
Why thus close veil'd? [*to Orestes.*] why this mysterious silence?
Elec. [*to Pylades.*] Speak to him. [*to Orestes.*] 'Tis thy friend—'tis Pylades.
Ores. Bid him avoid me—say is Calchas here?
Pyla. Orestes! look upon me—
Ores. Touch me not—
Away—unveil not this devoted head.
Pyla. Come to my arms.
Ores. My touch conveys pollution.
Pyla. Whate'er thy doom, 'tis mine.
Ores. [*uncovering himself.*] Let all avoid me:
This head is self-devoted to the Furies.
Pyla. What words are these? explain their awful meaning.
Wilt thou not speak?
Ores. I dare a nameless deed:
And now fate summons to a conference,
That more than death appals me.

Pyla. Oh!

Ores. Nay, sigh not—
No pitying sigh, no sound of soothing voice
Must now be heard by me. Such sounds would melt me.
I have held conference with a form of night:
My powers, each sense, and living faculty,
My soul, and its affections, all are bound
To beings that inhabit other worlds:
To this estrang'd and dead—Calchas! prepare
The solemn rites.

Cal. Come.

Ores. [*going, turns back.*] Pylades—Electra—

Elec. Oh, brother! brother!

Pyla. More than life belov'd!

Ores. Friend! Sister! Oh, I dare not say—farewell! [*Exit with Calchas.*

Pyla. Selected minister of Jove! farewell!

Elec. Avenger of a murther'd sire, farewell!
He hears, and waves me back—I now may weep—
Thou, whom I look on with a sister's eye,
Oh think not harshly of me, that a woman
Excites to vengeance—bear with me, I pray—
My heart is overcharg'd, and I have never
Found friendly ear, wherein I dar'd to breathe,
The whisper of a woe.

Pyla. You see a brother—

Elec. Not nature, but dire wrongs have steel'd Electra.
Thou heard'st his words; each sense, and faculty,
His soul, and his affections (so he spake)

Were dead to earth, estrang'd from human kind.
And wherefore dead to earth ? alas ! his spirit
Had commun'd with th'unearthly—with whom then
Has lorn Electra commun'd ? kindred beings ?
Had I a mother ? no—a murthress rear'd me.
What love ? what cares ? what counsel ? what example ?
Such as debase the soul, to vilest passions
Give brute excess : such as to name, shall never
Pollute my virgin lip.

Pyla. I pity thee—

Elec. No pity—spare me that—I am high-soul'd—
How else had I existed ? how sustain'd
While youth decay'd, year after year, to see
A base adulterer in Atrides' robes,
O'er me extend the sceptre of my race,
And when a tear gush'd forth, insult my woe ?
Hear him revile my father's memory :
And, if I look'd but stern, bid Phrygian slaves
Chain my free hands ? so have I liv'd for vengeance—
Dread, unexampled vengeance.

Pyla. Such dire wrongs
Pass human sufferance. Would I might assist thee !

Elec. Thou can'st assist me—thou like one from heav'n
May'st sooth Electra.

Pyla. Can this arm defend thee ?

Elec. Brave youth ! Orestes' arm is strongly nerv'd—

From thee I ask no act of blood, but one
Of unexampled kindness—

Pyla. Speak thy wish.

Elec. Hear then—Orestes nurs'd a woe in secret,
That prey'd upon his mind: from thee withheld,
Kindly withheld, lest it should shock thy nature:
Or, in th'unguarded transport of affection,
Bind thee in fellowship of woe with him
To nameless sufferings—

Pyla. Unkind Orestes!

Elec. The Oracle decreed—
E'en from the moment that he strikes the murthress,
Her persecuting Furies should pursue him,
'Till from the Tauric shrine he bring to Greece
One sacred to Diana—in his flight,
Mid the wild ravings of a mind distraught,
This too was plainly told—"that one alone
"Should tend him in his woe."

Pyla. Jove hear my vow!
That charge be mine!

Elec. Not if Electra live;
But, what the issue of this day of blood
Who, who can tell? when danger calls Orestes
I shall not stand aloof—if there I perish
Remember thou thy oath—

Pyla. 'Tis seal'd in heav'n.

Elec. Farewell, heroic youth! live thou renown'd
The theme of future ages! at the name
Of Pylades, let friendship hail the sound,
And tears, like mine, from glowing transport gush—

[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to Clytemnestra's apartment.

CLYTEMNESTRA, *walking to and fro in apparent agitation.*

The stranger youth! he comes not! Phedra left him
Unmindful of the passing revellers
Lone in the outward court—she bad him enter,
Said, that I thrice had summon'd him: he groan'd,
And seem'd most loath to come! why loath to come?
And whence these throbs portentous at my heart,
As if the soul unknowing what the woe
Gave presage of misfortune?—Ha! I hear
Their tread—they come—oh how they linger! sure
I catch their echoed voices—

Phe. [*behind the scenes*] Here—I pray thee
Enter—why turn away?

Ores. [*behind the scenes.*] Oh horror! horror!

Cly. [*rushing out, returns leading in Orestes—Phedra follows.*] Here, here—why this reluctance? thou, keep watch,
Strict watch, that none approach: no curious ear
Lurk nigh this chamber—hence—[*Phedra goes.*] none hear us now.
Why this repugnance, youth?

Ores. Let me depart.

Cly. Why dost thou tremble, stranger?

Ores. Grief—deep grief
Breeds strange confusion. I would fain depart—

Cly. [*stopping him.*] Stay, youth, thou must not hence—thou fear'st, perhaps,
I shall regard thee with ungracious eye,
For that thy voice, to Clytemnestra, first
Spoke of Orestes' death.
Ores. A voice so dread
No doubt were cause to cleave the heart in twain.
Did not a mother hear those piercing words
"Thy son is dead?"
Cly. [*reluctantly.*] He would have murther'd me?
Ores. A mother!—and a son!—oh horrible—
'Tis a sad strife for blood!
Cly. I slew him not.
Ores. Not him—but—
Cly. [*highly agitated.*] Stranger!
Ores. Speak—what would'st thou with me?
Do not detain me.
Cly. I would win thy favour.
Ores. Oh!
Cly. Why that groan?
Ores. We all have secret griefs—
Briefly disclose thy wish, and let me hence—
For I have that deep woe within my soul,
That other's misery can claim no part.
Cly. Would I could sooth thy grief, as thou can'st mine!
To thee I must my inmost heart unbosom—
For tho' thy brow be stern, and strange thy look,
Youth is the time when sympathising pity
Most sways the yielding bosom—thou art young,
And misery, such as mine, will touch thy soul.

Ores. Oh! oh!

Cly. If thus thy groan, ere thou hast heard it,
Ah! what—when utter'd—youth! thou see'st before thee,
No queen resplendent in the pomp of pow'r,
Her high soul swelling o'er with boundless bliss.
The unfed beggar, shivering at my gate,
Is far more blest than I!—he, at the close
Of each sad day, in rest of sleep may find
Relief from woe: and revel in the dream
That lifts him o'er this world's unequal lot,
To feast with Jove—my dream is of the dead—
Of spirits howling in eternal torture—
And when I rise,
'Tis from the bed of visionary horrors
To feel them real—pity, sooth, relieve me!
Fate has decreed that thou of all mankind
Alone can'st free me——

Ores. I!—

Cly. Thou know'st it well—

Ores. I know it—

Cly. Turn not thus thy looks away—
Here look on me, and as my eye meets thine,
Give answer—

Ores. Gaze not on me—I will answer—

Cly. Has not an oracle been heard by thee?

Ores. 'Tis certain.—I have heard prophetic sounds.

Cly. Calchas forewarn'd me—wilt thou not relieve me?
Thy heart is like thy brow: but I have gifts
That shall persuade assent.

Ores. Gifts !—bribes—to me—
For this !—
Cly. [*in rage.*] And, I have pow'r, unbounded pow'r,
That shall enforce compliance—
Ores. [*full of horror.*] Force !——beware—
Cly. Thy pale cheek flashes with unwonted fire:
Again, resistless shudders shake thy frame.
Nay—fear not—let compassion touch thy heart!
Hear, innocent youth! thou know'st not what it is:
Thou hast no stain of blood upon thy soul.
Could'st thou conceive !—no—none but murtherers can,
The tortures that await them !—I have felt them—
I have giv'n answer at the dead of night
To tongueless calls: my couch has been beset
With shapeless forms: the Furies of the slain
Have toss'd their torches round me, and their locks
Knotted with adders——
Ores. Cease—my brain's on fire—
Oh spare me! spare me!
Cly. Meet me on—the spot—
Down from thy brow big drops in horror roll—
[*Orestes fixes his eyes on a dagger in the apartment.*]
Why are thine eyes fix'd on yon glittering scabbard?
Ores. Spak'st thou not now of gifts? — give me that dagger,
And I will meet thee at the destin'd place.
Cly. I have rare gems and gold—those shall reward thee:

That steel is nothing worth—

Ores. Give me that dagger—
I'll meet thee on the spot—

Cly. Why strangely prize it?—

Ores. What! is it strange that man to battle bred
Should value a man's weapon? one, perhaps,
That grac'd, 'mid wond'ring chiefs, Atrides' side.
Refuse it, death in tortures ne'er shall daunt me.

Cly. [*gives it.*] Thou know'st not with what blade I arm thy hand.

Ores. [*full of horror.*] There is no blood on thee, thou shining steel!

[*aside, drawing the blade.*

Cly. Swear thou wilt meet Ægisthus—

Ores. [*ardently interrupting her.*] Aye—

Cly. And me,
At midnight—where—

Ores. Nay, nay, I know it all—
In the blood-sprinkled bath.

Cly. By oath confirm it.

Ores. An oath too!—by my Father's memory!

Cly. [*gives him two keys.*] Take these—this guards the passage—this, the bath—
Be there—and watch the tread of foot;—if mine,
This hand shall at the portal give the signal—
That heard, admit me.

Ores. I have sworn—

Cly. Farewell. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT THE FOURTH.

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Street before the Palace.

CALCHAS, PYLADES.

Cal. Obey—not mine the dictate—Jove there guides me.
Deem not that stern Ægisthus' summons mov'd me
To join the feast of murther.
Pyla. I obey.
Yet bid me not with tame forbearance hear
His insults, unaveng'd—oh! bid me plunge
This dagger in his heart, and there behold me
Stab the proud tyrant on his guarded throne.
Cal. Leave him to heav'n—Fate, at the destin'd time,
Will crush the impious.
Pyla. Seer, once more I urge thee,
May I not aid Orestes?—
Cal. Not this night—
The time shall come, when Pylades alone
Shall aid, alone shall sooth his frantic woe.

[*As they are going out they meet* ELECTRA.

Elec. Say, hast thou seen Orestes? I, in vain,
Have search'd the palace round.
Cal. He pass'd not here—

Pyla. How hast thou 'scap'd unnotic'd?
Elec. None keep watch—
The guards are steep'd in riotous excess.
Oh were not force forbidden! we ourselves,
Few as we are, might boldly dare the deed,
And master these brute revellers.
Cal. [*to Electra*] Go, Electra,
And if thou find Orestes, I enjoin thee,
Not unattended let him seek the bath.
I dread his troubled spirit.
Elec. Guide me, Jove!
Thanks, holy prophet—— [*Exit.*
Cal. [*to Pylades.*] To the banquet, come!
[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to a gloomy Court.

ORESTES.

Ores. Here let me pause—no voice is heard—no step
Breaks on this noiseless gloom—I saw the sun
Go calmly down—yet—once—('tis said) the God
Turn'd back with horror from Thyestes' feast.
Of kindred blood, I dare a kindred deed—
Let me not dwell on't. 'Tis not yet the hour.
Yon clouds, that gather o'er me, thickly veil
All that has form and hue in deepest gloom!
Man sees not man, the outward beam is dim,
Yet, ah! more clearly the internal light

Glares on the thought close-shrouded in the soul.
I hear a step.

ELECTRA *enters.*

Elec. Orestes! oh where art thou?
Ores. It is her voice!
Elec. Who speaks?—Orestes! answer—
Ores. I would this had not been!
Elec. 'Tis he—my brother.
Ores. I look'd not for this meeting. My intent
Is fixt—I shun all human intercourse.
Depart—I pray—
Elec. If 'tis thy wish—I go——
But—thus to part in fearful ignorance!—
Ores. Thou wilt not then with woman's pity melt me?—
Elec. Fix on thy heart thy hand, and count its beats,
Then question mine—our aim, our souls are one—
I will not vex thee with vain strife of words,
Turning thy spirit from its great intent:
But if thou hold my blood allied to thine,
Confide in me—
Ores. [*shewing the dagger.*] I have the dagger—here——
Elec. Enough——
Ores. And I have vow'd—
Elec. What vow?
Ores. At midnight
To meet her at the bath—
Elec. Th' adulterer with her?

Ores. He shall not 'scape—this too is fixt, that I
Go, ere the hour—these [*the keys.*] give me entrance
—then
At signal, I admit them—
Elec. But, my brother—
Ores. Wherefore this pause?
Elec. Thou goest not there alone—
Ores. Oh be my heart but firm, this arm, Electra,
Dreads no resistance.
Elec. Thou alone the avenger;
The son of Agamemnon shall alone
Claim, vindicate, and wear his father's honours—
But the dread deed is destin'd in the place
Where bled thy father—at the hour he fell—
Ores. I know it—aye, and justly so ordain'd—
Elec. There thou must wait alone th' appointed time.
Ores. Well—
Elec. How shall pass the dreary interval?
No light has glanc'd on that accursed spot
Since there he bled—
Ores. A lamp dispels the gloom—
Elec. To witness what? the robe which shrouded him,
Thrice rent, where each deep stroke did pierce his heart.
Thou wilt have leisure time: for what? to gaze on
The brazen bath crusted with unwash'd stains:
To count the drops of blood that spot the floor:
And gather one by one, wherever scatter'd,

Each hair, with blood distain'd, rent from his head
In the last struggle when he gasp'd for breath.
Ores. Thou shak'st my soul.
Elec. And thou wilt hear his groan
As the adultress smote him.
Ores. [*seizing her arm.*] Cease! Electra,
Come! let us go together—
Elec. Thus, Orestes,
Thus join'd, all, all will prosper.
Ores. Be thou present!
Shade of my father! rise! and claim revenge—
[*Exeunt.*

Scene, the Palace.

CLYTEMNESTRA *and* PHEDRA.

Phe. Loud rung their mirth—before I reach'd the hall
The tumult met my ear: I scarce could pass
The press of guests that round Ægisthus clamor'd.
I spake thy words, and much I wonder, Queen!
That thus he lingers.
Cly. Few are found, who quit
With willing speed, the feast and crowded banquet
At misery's call. And yet, methinks, Ægisthus
Had hasten'd when I urg'd. You spake my words!
Phe. When I drew near him, his bow'd head hung o'er
A heavy goblet charg'd with wine. I rous'd him,

And thrice repeated what thou spak'st—he heard,
And gave (forgive the utterance) slow assent.
Cly. Reluctantly complied!—you misconceiv'd—
You importun'd him rudely at the banquet.
He comes—it is himself—leave us—
[*Exit as Ægisthus enters.*
Ægisthus!
Why this delay?
Ægis. Thou should'st have join'd our revels—
Cly. What! to smile
On flattering fools, regardless of my doom,
When boding visitations summon me
To fate's uncertain issue? thou hast heard
The supernatural vision—
Ægis. Woman's fears!—
Cly. Light-hearted man! when Clytemnestra shakes
No brood of idle fear her soul appals—
The shape I saw was palpable as thine.
Laugh with thy slaves—to me give serious heed.
The banquet and the bowl awhile forget.
Ægis. Speak, I attend.—Heard'st thou that festive shout? [*a laugh and festal shout are heard.*]
Would that the phantom that appall'd thy soul
Might dare confront our feasters?
Cly. [*with highest indignation.*] 'Twas—Atrides—
[*Ægisthus starts back.*
Aye—start—the grape's thick fumes o'ercloud thy brain.
But I will rouse thy soul to conscious terror.
When answering torches on from mount to mount,

From Ida's crest to Argos, spake that Troy
Was levell'd, and the lord of Greece, the conqueror,
The son of Atreus, Agamemnon, sped
In triumph to his realm: who then preserv'd thee?

Ægis. Forbear—

Cly. In prostrate guise, thou call'd'st on me.
I struck the warrior while thou stood'st aloof—
I sav'd, I wedded, I first hail'd thee, King.

Ægis. Forbear—I will obey thee.

Cly. Mark at least,
Not mine the wreck of peace, of fame, of virtue,
For base ingratitude.

Ægis. Thy will is mine.

Cly. Ægisthus, 'tis decreed, the prophet spake it,
That from the youth, who bore Orestes' urn,
I claim deliverance from these madd'ning horrors:
The mystery of fate is known to him.
And ere two hours are past, the time is mark'd,
At midnight—in the bath—where fell Atrides,
I meet the youth: thou too must join my steps.
Delay not when I call.

Ægis. I now am ready,
Let us prevent his step.

Cly. Hast thou no fear?

Ægis. The place I fear not: nor that beardless youth—

Cly. Thou hast no weapon with thee—this at least
Were prudent, to go arm'd.

Ægis. Give me thy dagger.

Cly. The youth requested it.

Ægis. Thou—trust that dagger

To him! a youth unknown! well—'tis the hand
That gives the steel its worth—I will go arm'd—
Fear not—I will protect thee—
Cly. Thou protect me!
Oh be but with me! go, and if thou feast,
Avoid excess—be ready at the summons. [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to a magnificent banqueting-room, thronged with guests, and sumptuously decorated. Musicians, Singers, &c. &c.

PHANOR, *Guests.*

Pha. 'Tis but a transient absence—on his brow
Low'r'd discontent—the king was loath to leave us.
Our mirth shall chase his gloom. On his return,
Swift at his entrance, wake the lyre and flute,
And raise the festive chorus.—See he comes.

ÆGISTHUS *enters.*

[*instruments and voices strike up saluting him.*]
Pha. Hail, monarch! hail!— [*choral song.*
Ægis. I greet you all—most welcome—
The intervening moments, which, like clouds
Crossing the sun, broke rudely on our mirth,
By shew of grateful contrast, give new zest
And relish to enjoyment.—Welcome all.
My spirits, with redoubled ardour, rush
To meet your transport—fill again the bowl.
That strain once more— [*chorus is repeated.*

Fling wide the palace gates—the wond'ring strangers
Shall gaze on our magnificence—say, Phanor,
Where is the Prophet?—him I bade attend;
His oft-repeated threat will raise our mirth—
Looks this like Heav'n's displeasure? Where the strangers
That met us in our triumph?—
Pha. They attend.
We but delay'd, Ægisthus, till thy nod
Gave sign of entrance.
Ægis. Let them now advance.

Enter PYLADES *and* ARCAS.

Pha. Make way, make way.
Pyla. I pray thee, leave us here.
Ægis. Who speaks?
Pha. The stranger Phocians—
Ægis. Forward lead them.
Look! how they gaze, in speechless wonder lost.
Pha. The gorgeous majesty of Argos, dazzles
The unaccustom'd eye.
Ægis. Your Phocian feasts
Are poor to these?
Pyla. No, ours are holy banquets
Whereon the Gods look down—not feasts of blood.
Pha. Lo! Calchas comes—[*as the Prophet slowly advances, the scene gradually darkens.*
Ægis. Where is the hoary Prophet?

Pha. What strange obscurity o'erclouds the banquet?

Ægis. I scarce can see his face! give me thy torch.

Why dost thou gaze so fixedly upon me? [*to Calchas.*

Cal. The tears gush down thy cheek! thou see'st them not:

Thy groans, ill-fated wretch! thou hear'st them not—

Ægis. Are these thy wonted threat'nings?

Cal. I speak none—

Dread what the Heav'ns denounce!

[*violent thunder and lightning.*

Pha. The arch'd vault shakes!

Ægis. Methinks I sit like Jove enthron'd 'mid Gods,

While lightnings sport beneath me!—

[*the guests disperse in much confusion.*

Cal. Impious wretch!

Pha. How shall we 'scape? the roof is cop'd with flames.

Round every column streams the lightning's blaze.

Ægis. [*flinging away the bowl which he had lifted to his lips.*] Fill me another bowl—this tastes of blood— [*pours out a mock libation.*

This is our wonted offering to the shade

Of slain Atrides—

[*the voice that spoke at the tomb is heard.*

"Vengeance! vengeance! vengeance!"

Attendant *on Clytemnestra enters.*

Atten. King! Clytemnestra calls—
Ægis. I haste—
Cal. To death. [*Exeunt.*

Scene, the vaults leading to the Bath.

Orestes *and* Electra.

Ores. I am prepar'd for all—take thou the lamp.
So: hold the light. These locks by time encrusted
Will not give way
[*His hand trembles, unable rightly to direct the key.*]
Elec. It is thy hand that trembles,
Give me the key. The springs resist not—now
[*the door opens.*
Force back the iron grate—why dost thou start?
This way—thy hand, Orestes—follow me—
Ores. 'Tis loathsome as the charnel-house.
[*He lingers, and turns away.*
Elec. Quick, quick,
Hasten thy step—heed not—'twill pass away—
Ores. The damps imprison'd in this unsunn'd vault,
Strike me with death-like chill—hold up the light—
'Tis midnight darkness—
Elec. Come.
Ores. Thy single lamp
Scarce shoots a glimmering ray athwart the gloom.
Elec. Oh do not wish for more!

Ores. I understand thee—
I would not see her face—
Elec. Banish these thoughts—
Ores. [*in the utmost horror.*] Oh, sister! if her eye should glance on mine!
[*in passing on, he strikes his foot against the brazen bath.*]
What's this, which, as I struck it unawares,
Did loudly ring, and vibrate 'gainst my foot?—
Elec. Oh ask not! pass this way—
Ores. Ah! 'tis the bath
In which he perish'd! quick, take back the light.
Elec. This way—here wait, shrouded in thickest gloom—
Ores. [*starting forward in extreme agitation.*] Hah! seest thou not?
Elec. What moves thee?
Ores. 'Mid the darkness
There, there, it dimly gleams—unclasp my hand—
Elec. [*vainly attempting to hold him.*] Why dost thou struggle from me!
Ores. 'Tis the robe— [*seizes it.*
Elec. Keep firm his brain, oh Phœbus!
Ores. [*displaying the robe to the light.*] Heav'n and earth!
Thrice pierc'd!—and where the accursed dagger smote him,
Each rent blood-stain'd, yet marks the blow of hell—
Die, murth'ress! [*quite frantic.*] Call me not "thy son, thy son."
Clasp not my hand!—bare not thy breast to me—

Die, murthress! lo! she falls—this hand has stabb'd
her.
Ha! what are ye, that from each drop of blood
Start into life? foul hags! your blazing locks
Are viper-knotted. Why thus strain tow'rds me
Your eye-balls roll'd in blood? ye shall not grasp
me—
Stretch all your wings—I fly before the wind.
[*He falls exhausted.*

Elec. My brother!
[*Endeavouring to hold him in his struggles.*
Ores. Hah!
Elec. Know'st thou not me?
Ores. I know thee—
Thou art my mother's Fury—thou hast seiz'd me
To whirl me into Tartarus—[*violently struggling.*]—
off, off,
Down to the realms of torture—
Elec. Oh, my brother!
Ores. [*recovering.*] Electra!
Elec. Lov'd Orestes! oh, my brother!
Ores. Thou!
Elec. 'Tis thy sister clasps thee in her arms,
These are Electra's tears that wet thy cheek.
Ores. Clasp me—nay, closer—are they fled away?
Elec. 'Twas but the coinage of thy brain—
Ores. Indeed—
[*a noise of approaching steps.*
I hear the tread of feet—they come—they come—
Ægis. [*is heard behind the scenes.*] Where is the
youth that brought Orestes' urn?
Give entrance to Ægisthus—

Ores. 'Tis th' Adulterer—
I am myself again—King! enter in. [*Opens the door.*
Ægis. [*in entering.*] Go, slaves! bid Clytemnestra haste—away—
Ores. [*to Electra, as Ægisthus enters.*] This is a righteous blow! hold up the lamp,
That we may view each other, face to face.

ÆGISTHUS *enters.*

Ægis. Boy! drop that lifted dagger, or thou diest.
[*Drawing his sword.*
Ores. [*stabs him.*] 'Tis I, Orestes, Agamemnon's son,
Die, base adulterer! [*he falls groaning.*
Elec. So fall the base,
Th' adulterer, and oppressor!—hark! I hear
A hasty foot—art thou prepar'd?
Ores. Oh heav'n!
Quick, close that gate. Cast o'er this wretch the robe:
I would not shock her soul before the time:
Enough that this must be—
Elec. Is there aught else?
Ores. Put out thy light—[*she extinguishes it.*]—the lamp too which she bears,
On sudden, with swift hand, extinguish it.
If but a ray break forth, this dagger drops.
Cly. [*knocks thrice.*] Unbar the gate: give Clytemnestra entrance.
Ores. Quick, quick, unbar the portal—
[*at her entrance, Electra dashes out her lamp.*

Cly. What rude hand
Has seiz'd the lamp? where art thou, stranger? speak—
Ægisthus?
Ægis. Oh—
Cly. A death-groan strikes my ear—
What's this which bars my way? it is the robe
Which tangled him—there's one that stirs beneath:
And blood, warm blood, spouts thro' the heaving folds—
Ægis. [*faintly*] Fly—I am slain—Orestes' dagger pierc'd me—
He is the stranger—fly. [*he dies.*
[*as she attempts to fly, Orestes seizes her with one hand, with the other holds the dagger over her.*
Cly. What chill hand grasps me?
Ores. Thou must not live—
Cly. Spare me—my son! my son!
Strike not this breast that nurtur'd thee! have pity!—
My son! my son! have pity on thy mother—
Ores. [*turns his face away.*] I cannot wound her.
[*the voice that spoke at the tomb.*
"Vengeance! vengeance! vengeance!"
Cly. [*shrieks.*] Oh! 'tis Atrides' voice—there is no hope—
Thus—thus—my arm shall aid thy lingering blow.
[*seizes his arm, and rushes on the dagger.*
[*The curtain falls.*

THE END.

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" In preparing the Memoir, the editor was much gratified by discovering, that some materials, with a view to a similar undertaking, had been collected by a brother-in-law of Mr. Park; who, with the greatest candour, transmitted to him the whole of his papers.

" These materials have been of great use in preparing the Memoir; in which the editor has likewise been assisted by much useful information, which he has received from another brother-in-law of Mr. Park, Mr. James Dickson; and also from Mr. Park's two brothers.

" The editor is likewise greatly indebted to Major Rennell and to Zachary Macauley, Esq. for several interesting particulars concerning Mr. Park; and to the latter in particular, for much valuable information relative to the trade of this country with Africa, which will be found in the Appendix to the Memoir.

" But his acknowledgments are due, in an especial manner, to Sir Joseph Banks; who has not only favoured the editor with the fullest communication of his correspondence with Mr. Park, and of his papers relating to this subject, but has in every other respect assisted and promoted the present undertaking with a kindness and liberality, proportioned to his sincere and constant friendship for Mr. Park, and to his uniform zeal for whatever he considers to be, in any degree connected, with useful knowledge and scientific discovery."

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